

"To my dear Husband
on his birthday"

August 21st 1872



Barnaby Rudge.

When she dropped the book she had been reading to him aloud, and fell upon his neck, he stopped in his busy task of folding a piece of crape about his hat.

WORKS
OF
CHARLES DICKENS.

Riverside Edition.

*Fully illustrated from Designs by Darley, Gilbert,
Cruikshank, Phiz, etc.*

BARNABY RUDGE.
SKETCHES. — PART II.

VOL. II.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.



NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY HURD AND HOUGHTON.

Cambridge: Riverside Press

1871.


Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by
HURD AND HOUGHTON,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of
New York.

RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:
STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY
H. O. HOUGHTON AND COMPANY.

BARNABY RUDGE.

A TALE OF THE RIOTS OF 'EIGHTY

VOLUME III.



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Riverside Edition.

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BARNABY RUDGE

CHAPTER LVI.

THE Maypole cronies, little dreaming of the change so soon to come upon their favorite haunt, struck through the Forest path upon their way to London ; and avoiding the main road, which was hot and dusty, kept to the by-paths and the fields. As they drew nearer to their destination, they began to make inquiries of the people whom they passed, concerning the riots, and the truth or falsehood of the stories they had heard. The answers went far beyond any intelligence that had spread to quiet Chigwell. One man told them that that afternoon the Guards, conveying to Newgate some rioters who had been reëxamined, had been set upon by the mob and compelled to retreat ; another, that the houses of two witnesses near Clare Market were about to be pulled down when he came away ; another, that Sir George Saville's house in Leicester Fields was to be burned that night, and that it would go hard with Sir George if he fell into the people's hands, as it was he who had brought in the Catholic bill. All accounts agreed that the mob were out, in stronger numbers and more numerous parties than had yet appeared ; that the streets were unsafe ; that no man's house or life was worth an

hour's purchase; that the public consternation was increasing every moment; and that many families had already fled the city. One fellow who wore the popular color, damned them for not having cockades in their hats, and bade them set a good watch to-morrow night upon the prison-doors, for the locks would have a straining; another asked if they were fire-proof, that they walked abroad without the distinguishing mark of all good and true men; and a third who rode on horseback, and was quite alone, ordered them to throw, each man a shilling, in his hat, towards the support of the rioters. Although they were afraid to refuse compliance with this demand, and were much alarmed by these reports, they agreed, having come so far, to go forward, and see the real state of things with their own eyes. So they pushed on quicker, as men do who are excited by portentous news; and ruminating on what they had heard, spoke little to each other.

It was now night, and as they came nearer to the city, they had dismal confirmation of this intelligence in three great fires, all close together, which burnt fiercely and were gloomily reflected in the sky. Arriving in the immediate suburbs, they found that almost every house had chalked upon its door in large characters "No Popery," that the shops were shut, and that alarm and anxiety were depicted in every face they passed.

Noting these things with a degree of apprehension which neither of the three cared to impart, in its full extent, to his companions, they came to a turnpike gate, which was shut. They were passing through the turnstile on the path, when a horseman rode up from London at a hard gallop, and called to the toll-keeper in a voice of great agitation, to open quickly in the name of God.

The adjuration was so earnest, and vehement, that the man, with the lantern in his hand, came running out — toll-keeper though he was — and was about to throw the gate open, when happening to look behind him, he exclaimed, “Good Heaven, what’s that! Another fire!”

At this, the three turned their heads, and saw in the distance — straight in the direction whence they had come — a broad sheet of flame, casting a threatening light upon the clouds, which glimmered as though the conflagration were behind them, and showed like a wrathful sunset.

“My mind misgives me,” said the horseman, “or I know from what far building those flames come. Don’t stand aghast, my good fellow. Open the gate!”

“Sir,” cried the man, laying his hand upon his horse’s bridle as he let him through: “I know you now, sir; be advised by me; do not go on. I saw them pass, and know what kind of men they are. You will be murdered.”

“So be it!” said the horseman, looking intently towards the fire, and not at him who spoke.

“But sir — sir,” cried the man, grasping at his rein more tightly yet, “if you do go on, wear the blue ribbon. Here, sir,” he added, taking one from his own hat, “it’s necessity, not choice, that makes me wear it: it’s love of life and home, sir. Wear it for this one night, sir; only for this one night.”

“Do!” cried the three friends, pressing round his horse. “Mr. Haredale — worthy sir — good gentleman — pray be persuaded.”

“Who’s that?” cried Mr. Haredale, stooping down to look. “Did I hear Daisy’s voice?”

“You did, sir,” cried the little man. “Do be per-

suaded, sir. This gentleman says very true. Your life may hang upon it."

"Are you," said Mr. Haredale, abruptly, "afraid to come with me?"

"I, sir? — N-n-no."

"Put that ribbon in your hat. If we meet the rioters, swear that I took you prisoner for wearing it. I will tell them so with my own lips; for as I hope for mercy when I die, I will take no quarter from them, nor shall they have quarter from me, if we come hand to hand to-night. Up here — behind me — quick! Clasp me tight round the body, and fear nothing."

In an instant they were riding away, at full gallop, in a dense cloud of dust, and speeding on, like hunters in a dream.

It was well the good horse knew the road he traversed, for never once — no, never once in all the journey — did Mr. Haredale cast his eyes upon the ground, or turn them, for an instant, from the light towards which they sped so madly. Once he said in a low voice "It *is* my house," but that was the only time he spoke. When they came to dark and doubtful places, he never forgot to put his hand upon the little man to hold him more securely in his seat, but he kept his head erect and his eyes fixed on the fire, then, and always.

The road was dangerous enough, for they went the nearest way — headlong, — far from the highway — by lonely lanes and paths, where wagon-wheels had worn deep ruts; where hedge and ditch hemmed in the narrow strip of ground; and tall trees, arching overhead, made it profoundly dark. But on, on, on, with neither stop nor stumble, till they reached the Maypole door, and could plainly see that the fire began to fade, as if for want of fuel.

"Down — for one moment — for but one moment," said Mr. Haredale, helping Daisy to the ground, and following himself. "Willet — Willet — where are my niece and servants — Willet!"

Crying to him distractedly, he rushed into the bar. — The landlord bound and fastened to his chair; the place dismantled, stripped, and pulled about his ears; — nobody could have taken shelter here.

He was a strong man, accustomed to restrain himself, and suppress his strong emotions; but this preparation for what was to follow — though he had seen that fire burning, and knew that his house must be razed to the ground — was more than he could bear. He covered his face with his hands for a moment, and turned away his head.

"Johnny, Johnny," said Solomon — and the simple-hearted fellow cried outright, and wrung his hands — "Oh dear old Johnny, here's a change! That the May-pole bar should come to this, and we should live to see it! The old Warren too, Johnny — Mr. Haredale — oh, Johnny, what a piteous sight this is!"

Pointing to Mr. Haredale as he said these words, little Solomon Daisy put his elbows on the back of Mr. Willet's chair, and fairly blubbered on his shoulder.

While Solomon was speaking, old John sat, mute as a stock-fish, staring at him with an unearthly glare, and displaying, by every possible symptom, entire and complete unconsciousness. But when Solomon was silent again, John followed, with his great round eyes, the direction of his looks, and did appear to have some dawning distant notion that somebody had come to see him.

"You know us, don't you, Johnny?" said the little clerk, rapping himself on the breast. "Daisy, you know

— Chigwell Church — bell-ringer — little desk on Sundays — eh, Johnny ? ”

Mr. Willet reflected for a few moments, and then muttered, as it were mechanically : “ Let us sing to the praise and glory of ” —

“ Yes, to be sure,” cried the little man, hastily ; “ that’s it — that’s me, Johnny. You’re all right now, a’n’t you ? Say you’re all right, Johnny.”

“ All right ? ” pondered Mr. Willet, as if that were a matter entirely between himself and his conscience. “ All right ? Ah ! ”

“ They haven’t been misusing you with sticks, or pokers, or any other blunt instruments, — have they, Johnny ? ” asked Solomon, with a very anxious glance at Mr. Willet’s head. “ They didn’t beat you, did they ? ”

John knitted his brow ; looked downwards, as if he were mentally engaged in some arithmetical calculation ; then upwards, as if the total would not come at his call ; then at Solomon Daisy, from his eyebrow to his shoe-buckle ; then very slowly round the bar. And then a great, round, leaden-looking, and not at all transparent tear, came rolling out of each eye, and he said, as he shook his head : —

“ If they’d only had the goodness to murder me, I’d have thanked ’em kindly.”

“ No, no, no, don’t say that, Johnny,” whimpered his little friend. “ It’s very, very bad, but not quite so bad as that. No, no ! ”

“ Look’ee here, sir ! ” cried John, turning his rueful eyes on Mr. Haredale, who had dropped on one knee, and was hastily beginning to untie his bonds. “ Look’ee here, sir ! The very Maypole — the old dumb Maypole

—stares in at the winder, as if it said, ‘John Willet, John Willet, let’s go and pitch ourselves in the nighest pool of water as is deep enough to hold us; for our day is over!’”

“Don’t, Johnny, don’t,” cried his friend: no less affected by this mournful effort of Mr. Willet’s imagination, than by the sepulchral tone in which he had spoken for the Maypole. “Please don’t, Johnny!”

“Your loss is great, and your misfortune a heavy one,” said Mr. Haredale, looking restlessly towards the door: “and this is not a time to comfort you. If it were, I am in no condition to do so. Before I leave you, tell me one thing, and try to tell me plainly, I implore you. Have you seen, or heard of Emma?”

“No!” said Mr. Willet.

“Nor any one but these blood-hounds?”

“No!”

“They rode away, I trust in Heaven, before these dreadful scenes began,” said Mr. Haredale, who, between his agitation, his eagerness to mount his horse again, and the dexterity with which the cords were tied, had scarcely yet undone one knot. “A knife, Daisy!”

“You didn’t,” said John, looking about, as though he had lost his pocket-handkerchief or some such slight article — “either of you, gentlemen — see a — a coffin anywheres, did you?”

“Willet!” cried Mr. Haredale. Solomon dropped the knife, and instantly becoming limp from head to foot, exclaimed “Good gracious!”

— “Because,” said John, not at all regarding them, “a dead man called a little time ago, on his way yonder. I could have told you what name was on the plate, if he had brought his coffin with him, and left it behind. If he didn’t, it don’t signify.”

His landlord, who had listened to these words with breathless attention, started that moment to his feet; and, without a word, drew Solomon Daisy to the door, mounted his horse, took him up behind again, and flew rather than galloped towards the pile of ruins, which that day's sun had shone upon, a stately house. Mr. Willet stared after them, listened, looked down upon himself to make quite sure that he was still unbound, and, without any manifestation of impatience, disappointment, or surprise, gently relapsed into the condition from which he had so imperfectly recovered.

Mr. Haredale tied his horse to the trunk of a tree, and grasping his companion's arm, stole softly along the footpath, and into what had been the garden of his house. He stopped for an instant to look upon its smoking walls, and at the stars that shone through roof and floor upon the heap of crumbling ashes. Solomon glanced timidly in his face, but his lips were tightly pressed together, a resolute and stern expression sat upon his brow, and not a tear, a look, or gesture indicating grief, escaped him.

He drew his sword; felt for a moment in his breast, as though he carried other arms about him; then grasping Solomon by the wrist again, went with a cautious step all round the house. He looked into every doorway and gap in the wall; retraced his steps at every rustling of the air among the leaves; and searched in every shadowed nook with outstretched hands. Thus they made the circuit of the building: but they returned to the spot from which they had set out, without encountering any human being, or finding the least trace of any concealed straggler.

After a short pause, Mr. Haredale shouted twice or thrice. Then cried aloud, "Is there any one in hiding

here, who knows my voice ! There is nothing to fear now. If any of my people are here, I entreat them to answer !” He called them all by name ; his voice was echoed in many mournful tones ; then all was silent as before.

They were standing near the foot of the turret, where the alarm-bell hung. The fire had raged there, and the floors had been sawn, and hewn, and beaten down, besides. It was open to the night ; but a part of the staircase still remained, winding upward from a great mound of dust and cinders. Fragments of the jagged and broken steps offered an insecure and giddy footing here and there, and then were lost again, behind protruding angles of the wall, or in the deep shadows cast upon it by other portions of the ruin ; for by this time the moon had risen, and shone brightly.

As they stood here, listening to the echoes as they died away, and hoping in vain to hear a voice they knew, some of the ashes in this turret slipped and rolled down. Startled by the least noise in that melancholy place, Solomon looked up at his companion’s face, and saw that he had turned towards the spot, and that he watched and listened keenly.

He covered the little man’s mouth with his hand, and looked again. Instantly, with kindling eyes, he bade him on his life keep still, and neither speak nor move. Then holding his breath, and stooping down, he stole into the turret, with his drawn sword in his hand, and disappeared.

Terrified to be left there by himself, under such desolate circumstances, and after all he had seen and heard that night, Solomon would have followed, but there had been something in Mr. Haredale’s manner and his look,

the recollection of which held him spellbound. He stood rooted to the spot; and scarcely venturing to breathe, looked up with mingled fear and wonder.

Again the ashes slipped and rolled — very, very softly — again — and then again, as though they crumbled underneath the tread of a stealthy foot. And now a figure was dimly visible; climbing very softly; and often stopping to look down; now it pursued its difficult way; and now it was hidden from the view again.

It emerged once more, into the shadowy and uncertain light — higher now, but not much, for the way was steep and toilsome, and its progress very slow. What phantom of the brain did he pursue; and why did he look down so constantly. He knew he was alone? Surely his mind was not affected by that night's loss and agony. He was not about to throw himself headlong from the summit of the tottering wall. Solomon turned sick, and clasped his hands. His limbs trembled beneath him, and a cold sweat broke out upon his pallid face.

If he complied with Mr. Haredale's last injunction now, it was because he had not the power to speak or move. He strained his gaze, and fixed it on a patch of moonlight, into which, if he continued to ascend, he must soon emerge. When he appeared there, he would try to call to him.

Again the ashes slipped and crumbled; some stones rolled down, and fell with a dull, heavy sound upon the ground below. He kept his eyes upon the piece of moonlight. The figure was coming on, for its shadow was already thrown upon the wall. Now it appeared — and now looked round at him — and now —

The horror-stricken clerk uttered a scream that pierced the air, and cried "The ghost! The ghost!"

Long before the echo of his cry had died away, another form rushed out into the light, flung itself upon the foremost one, knelt down upon its breast, and clutched its throat with both hands.

“Villain!” cried Mr. Haredale, in a terrible voice — for it was he. “Dead and buried, as all men supposed through your infernal arts, but reserved by Heaven for this — at last — at last — I have you. You, whose hands are red with my brother’s blood, and that of his faithful servant, shed to conceal your own atrocious guilt — You, Rudge, double murderer and monster, I arrest you in the name of God, who has delivered you into my hands. No. Though you had the strength of twenty men,” he added, as the murderer writhed and struggled, “you could not escape me, or loosen my grasp to-night!”

CHAPTER LVII.

BARNABY, armed as we have seen, continued to pace up and down before the stable-door ; glad to be alone again, and heartily rejoicing in the unaccustomed silence and tranquillity. After the whirl of noise and riot in which the last two days had been passed, the pleasures of solitude and peace were enhanced a thousand-fold. He felt quite happy ; and as he leaned upon his staff and mused, a bright smile overspread his face, and none but cheerful visions floated into his brain.

Had he no thoughts of her, whose sole delight he was, and whom he had unconsciously plunged in such bitter sorrow and such deep affliction ? Oh yes. She was at the heart of all his cheerful hopes and proud reflections. It was she whom all this honor and distinction were to gladden ; the joy and profit were for her. What delight it gave her to hear of the bravery of her poor boy ! Ah ! He would have known that, without Hugh's telling him. And what a precious thing it was to know she lived so happily, and heard with so much pride (he pictured to himself her look when they told her) that he was in such high esteem : bold among the boldest, and trusted before them all. And when these frays were over, and the good lord had conquered his enemies, and they were all at peace again, and he and she were rich, what happiness they would have in talking of these troubled times when he was a great soldier : and when they sat alone

together in the tranquil twilight, and she had no longer reason to be anxious for the morrow, what pleasure would he have in the reflection that this was his doing — his — poor foolish Barnaby's; and in patting her on the cheek, and saying with a merry laugh, "Am I silly now, mother — am I silly now?"

With a lighter heart and step, and eyes the brighter for the happy tear that dimmed them for a moment, Barnaby resumed his walk; and singing gayly to himself, kept guard upon his quiet post.

His comrade Grip, the partner of his watch, though fond of basking in the sunshine, preferred to-day to walk about the stable; having a great deal to do in the way of scattering the straw, hiding under it such small articles as had been casually left about, and haunting Hugh's bed, to which he seemed to have taken a particular attachment. Sometimes Barnaby looked in and called him, and then he came hopping out; but he merely did this as a concession to his master's weakness, and soon returned again to his own grave pursuits: peering into the straw with his bill, and rapidly covering up the place, as if, Midas-like, he were whispering secrets to the earth and burying them; constantly busying himself upon the sly; and affecting, whenever Barnaby came past, to look up in the clouds and have nothing whatever on his mind: in short, conducting himself, in many respects, in a more than usually thoughtful, deep, and mysterious manner.

As the day crept on, Barnaby, who had no directions forbidding him to eat and drink upon his post, but had been, on the contrary, supplied with a bottle of beer and a basket of provisions, determined to break his fast, which he had not done since morning. To this end,

he sat down on the ground before the door, and putting his staff across his knees in case of alarm or surprise, summoned Grip to dinner.

This call, the bird obeyed with great alacrity; crying, as he sidled up to his master, "I'm a devil, I'm a Polly, I'm a kettle, I'm a Protestant, No Popery!" Having learnt this latter sentiment from the gentry among whom he had lived of late, he delivered it with uncommon emphasis.

"Well said, Grip!" cried his master, as he fed him with the daintiest bits. "Well said, old boy!"

"Never say die, bow wow wow, keep up your spirits, Grip, Grip, Grip, Holloa! We'll all have tea, I'm a Protestant kettle, No Popery!" cried the raven.

"Gordon forever, Grip!" cried Barnaby.

The raven, placing his head upon the ground, looked at his master sideways, as though he would have said, "Say that again!" Perfectly understanding his desire, Barnaby repeated the phrase a great many times. The bird listened with profound attention; sometimes repeating the popular cry in a low voice, as if to compare the two, and try if it would at all help him to this new accomplishment; sometimes flapping his wings, or barking; and sometimes in a kind of desperation drawing a multitude of corks, with extraordinary viciousness.

Barnaby was so intent upon his favorite, that he was not at first aware of the approach of two persons on horseback, who were riding at a footpace, and coming straight towards his post. When he perceived them, however, which he did when they were within some fifty yards of him, he jumped hastily up, and ordering Grip within doors, stood with both hands on his staff, wait-

ing until he should know whether they were friends or foes.

He had hardly done so, when he observed that those who advanced were a gentleman and his servant; almost at the same moment he recognized Lord George Gordon, before whom he stood uncovered, with his eyes turned towards the ground.

"Good-day!" said Lord George, not reining in his horse until he was close beside him. "Well!"

"All quiet, sir, all safe!" cried Barnaby. "The rest are away — they went by that path — that one. A grand party!"

"Ay?" said Lord George, looking thoughtfully at him. "And you?"

"Oh! They left me here to watch — to mount guard — to keep everything secure till they come back. I'll do it, sir, for your sake. You're a good gentleman; a kind gentleman — ay, you are. There are many against you, but we'll be a match for them, never fear!"

"What's that?" said Lord George — pointing to the raven who was peeping out of the stable-door — but still looking thoughtfully, and in some perplexity, it seemed, at Barnaby.

"Why, don't you know!" retorted Barnaby, with a wondering laugh. "Not know what *he* is! A bird, to be sure. My bird — my friend — Grip."

"A devil, a kettle, a Grip, a Polly, a Protestant, no Popery!" cried the raven.

'Though, indeed," added Barnaby, laying his hand upon the neck of Lord George's horse, and speaking softly: "you had good reason to ask me what he is, for sometimes it puzzles me — and I am used to him — to think he's only a bird. He's my brother, Grip

is — always with me — always talking — always merry — eh, Grip?”

The raven answered by an affectionate croak, and hopping on his master's arm, which he held downward for that purpose, submitted with an air of perfect indifference to be fondled, and turned his restless, curious eye, now upon Lord George, and now upon his man.

Lord George, biting his nails in a discomfited manner, regarded Barnaby for some time in silence; then beckoning to his servant, said:—

“Come hither, John.”

John Grueby touched his hat, and came.

“Have you ever seen this young man before?” his master asked, in a low voice.

“Twice, my lord,” said John. “I see him in the crowd last night and Saturday.”

“Did — did it seem to you that his manner was at all wild or strange?” Lord George demanded, faltering.

“Mad,” said John, with emphatic brevity.

“And why do you think him mad, sir?” said his master, speaking in a peevish tone. “Don't use that word too freely. Why do you think him mad?”

“My lord,” John Grueby answered, “look at his dress, look at his eyes, look at his restless way, hear him cry No Popery!’ Mad, my lord.”

“So because one man dresses unlike another,” returned his angry master, glancing at himself, “and happens to differ from other men in his carriage and manner, and to advocate a great cause which the corrupt and irreligious desert, he is to be accounted mad, is he?”

“Stark, staring, raving, roaring mad, my lord,” returned the unmoved John.

"Do you say this to my face?" cried his master, turning sharply upon him.

"To any man, my lord, who asks me," answered John.

"Mr. Gashford, I find, was right," said Lord George; "I thought him prejudiced, though I ought to have known a man like him better than to have supposed it possible!"

"I shall never have Mr. Gashford's good word, my lord," replied John, touching his hat respectfully, "and I don't covet it."

"You are an ill-conditioned, most ungrateful fellow," said Lord George: "a spy, for anything I know. Mr. Gashford is perfectly correct, as I might have felt convinced he was. I have done wrong to retain you in my service. It is a tacit insult to him as my choice and confidential friend to do so, remembering the cause you sided with, on the day he was maligned at Westminster. You will leave me to-night — nay, as soon as we reach home. The sooner the better."

"If it comes to that, I say so too, my lord. Let Mr. Gashford have his will. As to my being a spy, my lord, you know me better than to believe it, I am sure. I don't know much about causes. My cause is the cause of one man against two hundred; and I hope it always will be."

"You have said quite enough," returned Lord George, motioning him to go back. "I desire to hear no more."

"If you'll let me add another word, my lord," returned John Grueby, "I'd give this silly fellow a caution not to stay here by himself. The proclamation is in a good many hands already, and it's well known that he was

concerned in the business it relates to. He had better get to a place of safety if he can, poor creature."

"You hear what this man says?" cried Lord George, addressing Barnaby, who had looked on and wondered while this dialogue passed. "He thinks you may be afraid to remain upon your post, and are kept here perhaps against your will. What do you say?"

"I think, young man," said John, in explanation, "that the soldiers may turn out and take you; and that if they do, you will certainly be hung by the neck till you're dead — dead — dead. And I think you'd better go from here, as fast as you can. That's what I think."

"He's a coward, Grip, a coward!" cried Barnaby, putting the raven on the ground, and shouldering his staff. "Let them come! Gordon forever! Let them come!"

"Ay!" said Lord George, "let them! Let us see who will venture to attack a power like ours; the solemn league of a whole people. *This* a madman! You have said well, very well. I am proud to be the leader of such men as you."

Barnaby's heart swelled within his bosom as he heard these words. He took Lord George's hand and carried it to his lips; patted his horse's crest, as if the affection and admiration he had conceived for the man extended to the animal he rode; then unfurled his flag, and proudly waving it, resumed his pacing up and down.

Lord George, with a kindling eye and glowing cheek, took off his hat, and flourishing it above his head, bade him exultingly Farewell! — then cantered off at a brisk pace; after glancing angrily round to see that his servant followed. Honest John set spurs to his horse and

rode after his master, but not before he had again warned Barnaby to retreat, with many significant gestures, which indeed he continued to make, and Barnaby to resist, until the windings of the road concealed them from each other's view.

Left to himself again with a still higher sense of the importance of his post, and stimulated to enthusiasm by the special notice and encouragement of his leader, Barnaby walked to and fro in a delicious trance rather than as a waking man. The sunshine which prevailed around was in his mind. He had but one desire ungratified. If she could only see him now !

The day wore on ; its heat was gently giving place to the cool of evening ; a light wind sprung up, fanning his long hair, and making the banner rustle pleasantly above his head. There was a freedom and freshness in the sound and in the time, which chimed exactly with his mood. He was happier than ever.

He was leaning on his staff looking towards the declining sun, and reflecting with a smile that he stood sentinel at that moment over buried gold, when two or three figures appeared in the distance, making towards the house at a rapid pace, and motioning with their hands as though they urged its inmates to retreat from some approaching danger. As they drew nearer, they became more earnest in their gestures ; and they were no sooner within hearing, than the foremost among them cried that the soldiers were coming up.

At these words Barnaby furled his flag, and tied it round the pole. His heart beat high while he did so, but he had no more fear or thought of retreating than the pole itself. The friendly stragglers hurried past him, after giving him notice of his danger, and quickly

passed into the house, where the utmost confusion immediately prevailed. As those within hastily closed the windows and the doors, they urged him by looks and signs to fly without loss of time, and called to him many times to do so; but he only shook his head indignantly in answer, and stood the firmer on his post. Finding that he was not to be persuaded, they took care of themselves; and leaving the place with only one old woman in it, speedily withdrew.

As yet there had been no symptom of the news having any better foundation than in the fears of those who brought it, but The Boot had not been deserted five minutes, when there appeared coming across the fields, a body of men who, it was easy to see, by the glitter of their arms and ornaments in the sun, and by their orderly and regular mode of advancing — for they came on as one man — were soldiers. In a very little time, Barnaby knew that they were a strong detachment of the Foot Guards, having along with them two gentlemen in private clothes, and a small party of Horse; the latter brought up the rear, and were not in number more than six or eight.

They advanced steadily; neither quickening their pace as they came nearer, nor raising any cry, nor showing the least emotion or anxiety. Though this was a matter of course in the case of regular troops, even to Barnaby there was something particularly impressive and disconcerting in it to one accustomed to the noise and tumult of an undisciplined mob. For all that, he stood his ground not a whit the less resolutely, and looked on undismayed.

Presently, they marched into the yard, and halted. The commanding officer despatched a messenger to the

horsemen, one of whom came riding back. Some words passed between them, and they glanced at Barnaby, who well remembered the man he had unhorsed at Westminster, and saw him now before his eyes. The man being speedily dismissed, saluted, and rode back to his comrades, who were drawn up apart at a short distance.

The officer then gave the word to prime and load. The heavy ringing of the musket-stocks upon the ground, and the sharp and rapid rattling of the ramrods in their barrels, were a kind of relief to Barnaby, deadly though he knew the purport of such sounds to be. When this was done, other commands were given, and the soldiers instantaneously formed in single file all round the house and stables; completely encircling them in every part, at a distance, perhaps, of some half-dozen yards; at least that seemed in Barnaby eyes to be about the space left between himself and those who confronted him. The horsemen remained drawn up by themselves as before.

The two gentlemen in private clothes who had kept aloof, now rode forward, one on either side the officer. The proclamation having been produced and read by one of them, the officer called on Barnaby to surrender.

He made no answer, but stepping within the door, before which he had kept guard, held his pole cross wise to protect it. In the midst of a profound silence he was again called upon to yield.

Still he offered no reply. Indeed he had enough to do, to run his eye backward and forward along the half-dozen men who immediately fronted him, and settle hurriedly within himself at which of them he would strike

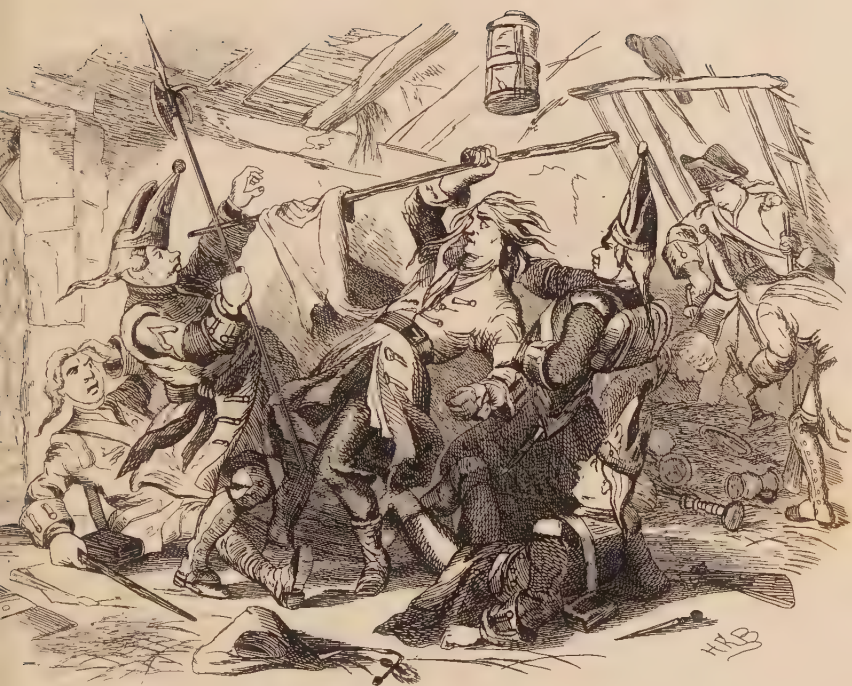
first, when they pressed on him. He caught the eye of one in the centre, and resolved to hew that fellow down, though he died for it.

Again there was a dead silence, and again the same voice called upon him to deliver himself up.

Next moment he was back in the stable, dealing blows about him like a madman. Two of the men lay stretched at his feet; the one he had marked, dropped first — he had a thought for that, even in the hot blood and hurry of the struggle. Another blow — another! Down, mastered, wounded in the breast by a heavy blow from the butt-end of a gun (he saw the weapon in the act of falling) — breathless — and a prisoner.

An exclamation of surprise from the officer recalled him, in some degree, to himself. He looked round, Grip, after working in secret all the afternoon, and with redoubled vigor while everybody's attention was distracted, had plucked away the straw from Hugh's bed, and turned up the loose ground with his iron bill. The hole had been recklessly filled to the brim, and was merely sprinkled with earth. Golden cups, spoons, candlesticks, coined guineas — all the riches were revealed.

They brought spades and a sack; dug up everything that was hidden there; and carried away more than two men could lift. They handcuffed him and bound his arms, searched him, and took away all he had. Nobody questioned or reproached him, or seemed to have much curiosity about him. The two men he had stunned, were carried off by their companions in the same business-like way in which everything else was done. Finally, he was left under a guard of four soldiers with fixed bayonets, while the officer directed in



person the search of the house and the other buildings connected with it.

This was soon completed. The soldiers formed again in the yard; he was marched out, with his guard about him; and ordered to fall in where a space was left. The others closed up all round, and so they moved away, with the prisoner in the centre.

When they came into the streets, he felt he was a sight: and looking up as they passed quickly along, could see people running to the windows a little too late, and throwing up the sashes to look after him. Sometimes he met a staring face beyond the heads above him, or under the arms of his conductors, or peering down upon him from a wagon-top or coach-box; but this was all he saw, being surrounded by so many men. The very noises of the streets seemed muffled and subdued; and the air came stale and hot upon him, like the sickly breath of an oven.

Tramp, tramp. Tramp, tramp. Heads erect, shoulders square, every man stepping in exact time — all so orderly and regular — nobody looking at him — nobody seeming conscious of his presence, — he could hardly believe he was a Prisoner. But at the word, though only thought, not spoken, he felt the handcuffs galling his wrists, the cord pressing his arms to his sides: the loaded guns levelled at his head; and those cold, bright, sharp, shining points turned towards him: the mere looking down at which, now that he was bound and helpless, made the warm current of his life run cold.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THEY were not long in reaching the barracks, for the officer who commanded the party was desirous to avoid rousing the people by the display of military force in the streets, and was humanely anxious to give as little opportunity as possible for any attempt at rescue; knowing that it must lead to bloodshed and loss of life, and that if the civil authorities by whom he was accompanied, empowered him to order his men to fire, many innocent persons would probably fall, whom curiosity or idleness had attracted to the spot. He therefore led the party briskly on, avoiding with a merciful prudence the more public and crowded thoroughfares, and pursuing those which he deemed least likely to be infested by disorderly persons. This wise proceeding not only enabled them to gain their quarters without any interruption, but completely baffled a body of rioters who had assembled in one of the main streets, through which it was considered certain they would pass, and who remained gathered together for the purpose of releasing the prisoner from their hands, long after they had deposited him in a place of security, closed the barrack-gates, and set a double guard at every entrance for its better protection.

Arrived at this place, poor Barnaby was marched into a stone-floored room, where there was a very powerful smell of tobacco, a strong thorough draft of air, and a great wooden bedstead, large enough for a score of men.

Several soldiers in undress were lounging about, or eating from tin-cans; military accoutrements dangled on rows of pegs along the whitewashed wall; and some half-dozen men lay fast asleep upon their backs, snoring in concert. After remaining here just long enough to note these things, he was marched out again, and conveyed across the parade-ground to another portion of the building.

Perhaps a man never sees so much at a glance as when he is in a situation of extremity. The chances are a hundred to one, that if Barnaby had lounged in at the gate to look about him, he would have lounged out again with a very imperfect idea of the place, and would have remembered very little about it. But as he was taken handcuffed across the gravelled area, nothing escaped his notice. The dry, arid look of the dusty square, and of the bare brick building; the clothes hanging at some of the windows; and the men in their shirt sleeves and braces, lolling with half their bodies out of the others; the green sun-blinds at the officers' quarters, and the little scanty trees in front; the drummer-boys practising in a distant court-yard; the men on drill on the parade; the two soldiers carrying a basket between them, who winked to each other as he went by, and slyly pointed to their throats; the spruce Sergeant who hurried past with a cane in his hand, and under his arm a clasped book with a vellum cover; the fellows in the ground-floor rooms, furbishing and brushing up their different articles of dress, who stopped to look at him, and whose voices as they spoke together echoed loudly through the empty galleries and passages; — everything, down to the stand of muskets before the guard-house, and the drum with a pipe-clayed belt attached, in one

corner, impressed itself upon his observation, as though he had noticed them in the same place a hundred times, or had been a whole day among them, in place of one brief hurried minute.

He was taken into a small paved back-yard, and there they opened a great door, plated with iron, and pierced some five feet above the ground with a few holes to let in air and light. Into this dungeon he was walked straightway ; and having locked him up there, and placed a sentry over him, they left him to his meditations.

The cell, or black-hole, for it had those words painted on the door, was very dark, and having recently accommodated a drunken deserter, by no means clean. Barnaby felt his way to some straw at the farther end, and looking towards the door, tried to accustom himself to the gloom, which, coming from the bright sunshine out of doors, was not an easy task.

There was a kind of portico or colonnade outside, and this obstructed even the little light that at the best could have found its way through the small apertures in the door. The footsteps of the sentinel echoed monotonously as he paced its stone pavement to and fro (reminding Barnaby of the watch he had so lately kept himself) ; and as he passed and repassed the door, he made the cell for an instant so black by the interposition of his body, that his going away again seemed like the appearance of a new ray of light, and was quite a circumstance to look for.

When the prisoner had sat some time upon the ground, gazing at the chinks, and listening to the advancing and receding footsteps of his guard, the man stood still upon his post. Barnaby, quite unable to think, or to specu-

late on what would be done with him, had been lulled into a kind of doze by his regular pace ; but his stopping roused him ; and then he became aware that two men were in conversation under the colonnade, and very near the door of his cell.

How long they had been talking there, he could not tell, for he had fallen into an unconsciousness of his real position, and when the footsteps ceased, was answering aloud some question which seemed to have been put to him by Hugh in the stable, though of the fancied purport, either of question or reply, notwithstanding that he awoke with the latter on his lips, he had no recollection whatever. The first words that reached his ears, were these :

“ Why is he brought here then, if he has to be taken away again so soon ? ”

“ Why, where would you have him go ! Damme, he’s not as safe anywhere as among the king’s troops, is he ? What *would* you do with him ? Would you hand him over to a pack of cowardly civilians, that shake in their shoes till they wear the soles out, with trembling at the threats of the ragamuffins he belongs to ? ”

“ That’s true enough.”

“ True enough ! — I’ll tell you what. I wish, Tom Green, that I was a commissioned instead of a non-commissioned officer, and that I had the command of two companies — only two companies — of my own regiment. Call me out to stop these riots — give me the needful authority, and half a dozen rounds of ball-cartridge ” —

“ Ay ! ” said the other voice. “ That’s all very well, but they won’t give the needful authority. If the magistrate won’t give the word, what’s the officer to do ? ”

Not very well knowing, as it seemed, how to overcome this difficulty, the other man contented himself with damning the magistrates.

"With all my heart," said his friend.

"Where's the use of a magistrate?" returned the other voice. "What's a magistrate in this case, but an impertinent, unnecessary, unconstitutional sort of interference? Here's a proclamation. Here's a man referred to in that proclamation. Here's proof against him, and a witness on the spot. Damme! Take him out and shoot him, sir. Who wants a magistrate?"

"When does he go before Sir John Fielding?" asked the man who had spoken first.

"To-night at eight o'clock," returned the other. "Mark what follows. The magistrate commits him to Newgate. Our people take him to Newgate. The rioters pelt our people. Our people retire before the rioters. Stones are thrown; insults are offered, not a shot's fired. Why? Because of the magistrates. Damn the magistrates!"

When he had in some degree relieved his mind by cursing the magistrates in various other forms of speech, the man was silent, save for a low growling, still having reference to those authorities, which from time to time escaped him.

Barnaby, who had wit enough to know that this conversation concerned, and very nearly concerned, himself, remained perfectly quiet until they ceased to speak, when he groped his way to the door, and peeping through the air-holes, tried to make out what kind of men they were, to whom he had been listening.

The one who condemned the civil power in such strong terms, was a sergeant — engaged just then, as the

streaming ribbons in his cap announced, on the recruiting service. He stood leaning sideways against a pillar nearly opposite the door, and as he growled to himself, drew figures on the pavement with his cane. The other man had his back towards the dungeon, and Barnaby could only see his form. To judge from that, he was a gallant, manly, handsome fellow, but he had lost his left arm. It had been taken off between the elbow and the shoulder, and his empty coat-sleeve hung across his breast.

It was probably this circumstance which gave him an interest beyond any that his companion could boast of, and attracted Barnaby's attention. There was something soldierly in his bearing, and he wore a jaunty cap and jacket. Perhaps he had been in the service at one time or other. If he had, it could not have been very long ago, for he was but a young fellow now.

"Well, well," he said thoughtfully; "let the fault be where it may, it makes a man sorrowful to come back to old England, and see her in this condition."

"I suppose the pigs will join 'em next," said the sergeant, with an imprecation on the rioters, "now that the birds have set 'em the example."

"The birds!" repeated Tom Green.

"Ah—birds!" said the sergeant testily; "that's English, a'n't it?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"Go to the guard-house, and see. You'll find a bird there, that's got their cry as pat as any of 'em, and bawls

No Popery,' like a man—or like a devil, as he says he is. I shouldn't wonder. The devil's loose in London somewhere. Damme if I wouldn't twist his neck round, on the chance, if I had *my* way."

The young man had taken two or three steps away, as if to go and see this creature, when he was arrested by the voice of Barnaby.

"It's mine," he called out, half laughing and half weeping — "my pet, my friend Grip. Ha. ha, ha! Don't hurt him, he has done no harm. I taught him; it's my fault. Let me have him, if you please. He's the only friend I have left now. He'll not dance, or talk, or whistle for you, I know; but he will for me, because he knows me, and loves me — though you wouldn't think it — very well. You wouldn't hurt a bird, I'm sure. You're a brave soldier, sir, and wouldn't harm a woman or a child — no, no, nor a poor bird, I'm certain."

This latter adjuration was addressed to the sergeant, whom Barnaby judged from his red coat to be high in office, and able to seal Grip's destiny by a word. But that gentleman, in reply, surlily damned him for a thief and rebel as he was, and with many disinterested imprecations on his own eyes, liver, blood, and body, assured him that if it rested with him to decide, he would put a final stopper on the bird, and his master too.

"You talk boldly to a caged man," said Barnaby, in anger. "If I was on the other side of the door and there were none to part us, you'd change your note — ay, you may toss your head — you would! Kill the bird — do. Kill anything you can, and so revenge yourself on those who with their bare hands untied could do as much to you!"

Having vented his defiance, he flung himself into the farthest corner of his prison, and muttering, "Good-by, Grip — good-by, dear old Grip!" shed tears for the first time since he had been taken captive; and hid his face in the straw.

He had had some fancy at first, that the one-armed man would help him, or would give him a kind word in answer. He hardly knew why, but he hoped and thought so. The young fellow had stopped when he called out, and checking himself in the very act of turning round, stood listening to every word he said. Perhaps he built his feeble trust on this; perhaps on his being young, and having a frank and honest manner. However that might be, he built on sand. The other went away directly he had finished speaking, and neither answered him, nor returned. No matter. They were all against him here; he might have known as much. Good-by, old Grip, good-by!

After some time, they came and unlocked the door, and called to him to come out. He rose directly, and complied, for he would not have *them* think he was subdued or frightened. He walked out like a man, and looked from face to face.

None of them returned his gaze or seemed to notice it. They marched him back to the parade by the way they had brought him, and there they halted, among a body of soldiers, at least twice as numerous as that which had taken him prisoner in the afternoon. The officer he had seen before, bade him in a few brief words take notice that if he attempted to escape, no matter how favorable a chance he might suppose he had, certain of the men had orders to fire upon him, that moment. They then closed round him as before, and marched him off again.

In the same unbroken order they arrived at Bow Street, followed and beset on all sides by a crowd which was continually increasing. Here he was placed before a blind gentleman, and asked if he wished to say any-

thing. Not he. What had he got to tell them? After a very little talking, which he was careless of and quite indifferent to, they told him he was to go to Newgate, and took him away.

He went out into the street, so surrounded and hemmed in on every side by soldiers, that he could see nothing; but he knew there was a great crowd of people, by the murmur; and that they were not friendly to the soldiers, was soon rendered evident by their yells and hisses. How often and how eagerly he listened for the voice of Hugh! No. There was not a voice he knew among them all. Was Hugh a prisoner too? Was there no hope!

As they came nearer and nearer to the prison, the hootings of the people grew more violent; stones were thrown; and every now and then, a rush was made against the soldiers, which they staggered under. One of them, close before him, smarting under a blow upon the temple, levelled his musket, but the officer struck it upwards with his sword, and ordered him on peril of his life to desist. This was the last thing he saw with any distinctness, for directly afterwards he was tossed about, and beaten to and fro, as though in a tempestuous sea. But go where he would, there were the same guards about him. Twice or thrice he was thrown down, and so were they; but even then, he could not elude their vigilance for a moment. They were up again, and had closed about him, before he, with his wrists so tightly bound, could scramble to his feet. Fenced in, thus, he felt himself hoisted to the top of a low flight of steps, and then for a moment he caught a glimpse of the fighting in the crowd and of a few red coats sprinkled together, here and there, struggling to rejoin their fellows.

Next moment, everything was dark and gloomy, and he was standing in the prison lobby ; the centre of a group of men.

A smith was speedily in attendance, who riveted upon him a set of heavy irons. Stumbling on as well as he could, beneath the unusual burden of these fetters, he was conducted to a strong stone cell, where, fastening the door with locks, and bolts, and chains, they left him, well secured ; having first, unseen by him, thrust in Grip, who, with his head drooping and his deep black plumes rough and rumpled, appeared to comprehend and to partake, his master's fallen fortunes.

CHAPTER LIX.

It is necessary at this juncture to return to Hugh, who, having, as we have seen, called to the rioters to disperse from about the Warren, and meet again as usual, glided back into the darkness from which he had emerged, and reappeared no more that night.

He paused in the copse which sheltered him from the observation of his mad companions, and waited to ascertain whether they drew off at his bidding, or still lingered and called to him to join them. Some few, he saw, were indisposed to go away without him, and made towards the spot where he stood concealed as though they were about to follow in his footsteps, and urge him to come back ; but these men, being in their turn called to by their friends, and in truth not greatly caring to venture into the dark parts of the grounds, where they might be easily surprised and taken, if any of the neighbors or retainers of the family were watching them from among the trees, soon abandoned the idea, and hastily assembling such men as they found of their mind at the moment, straggled off.

When he was satisfied that the great mass of the insurgents were imitating this example, and that the ground was rapidly clearing, he plunged into the thickest portion of the little wood ; and crashing the branches as he went, made straight towards a distant light : guided by that, and by the sullen glow of the fire behind him.

As he drew nearer and nearer to the twinkling beacon towards which he bent his course, the red glare of a few torches began to reveal itself, and the voices of men speaking together in a subdued tone, broke the silence, which, save for a distant shouting now and then, already prevailed. At length he cleared the wood, and, springing across a ditch, stood in a dark lane, where a small body of ill-looking vagabonds, whom he had left there some twenty minutes before, waited his coming with impatience.

They were gathered round an old post-chaise or chariot, driven by one of themselves, who sat postilion-wise upon the near horse. The blinds were drawn up, and Mr. Tappertit and Dennis kept guard at the two windows. The former assumed the command of the party, for he challenged Hugh as he advanced towards them; and when he did so, those who were resting on the ground about the carriage rose to their feet and clustered round him.

"Well!" said Simon, in a low voice; "is all right?"

"Right enough," replied Hugh, in the same tone. "They're dispersing now — had begun before I came away."

"And is the coast clear?"

"Clear enough before our men, I take it," said Hugh. "There are not many who, knowing of their work over yonder, will want to meddle with 'em to-night. — Who's got some drink here?"

Everybody had some plunder from the cellar; half a dozen flasks and bottles were offered directly. He selected the largest, and putting it to his mouth, sent the wine gurgling down his throat. Having emptied it, he threw it down, and stretched out his hand for another

which he emptied likewise, at a draught. Another was given him, and this he half emptied too. Reserving what remained, to finish with, he asked:—

“Have you got anything to eat, any of you? I’m as ravenous as a hungry wolf. Which of you was in the larder—come?”

“I was, brother,” said Dennis, pulling off his hat, and fumbling in the crown. “There’s a matter of cold venison pasty somewhere or another here, if that’ll do?”

“Do!” cried Hugh, seating himself on the pathway. “Bring it out! Quick! Show a light here, and gather round! Let me sup in state, my lads! Ha, ha, ha!”

Entering into his boisterous humor, for they all had drunk deeply, and were as wild as he, they crowded about him, while two of their number who had torches, held them up, one on either side of him, that his banquet might not be despatched in the dark. Mr. Dennis, having by this time succeeded in extricating from his hat a great mass of pasty, which had been wedged in so tightly that it was not easily got out, put it before him; and Hugh, having borrowed a notched and jagged knife from one of the company, fell to work upon it vigorously.

“I should recommend you to swallow a little fire every day, about an hour afore dinner, brother,” said Dennis, after a pause. “It seems to agree with you, and to stimulate your appetite.”

Hugh looked at him, and at the blackened faces by which he was surrounded, and, stopping for a moment to flourish his knife above his head, answered with a roar of laughter.

“Keep order there, will you?” said Simon Tappertit.

"Why, isn't a man allowed to regale himself, noble captain," retorted his lieutenant, parting the men who stood between them, with his knife, that he might see him, — "to regale himself a little bit, after such work as mine? What a hard captain! What a strict captain! What a tyrannical captain! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wish one of you fellers would hold a bottle to his mouth to keep him quiet," said Simon, "unless you want the military to be down upon us."

"And what if they are down upon us!" retorted Hugh. "Who cares? Who's afraid? Let 'em come, I say, let 'em come. The more, the merrier. Give me bold Barnaby at my side, and we two will settle the military, without troubling any of you. Barnaby's the man for the military. Barnaby's health!"

But as the majority of those present were by no means anxious for a second engagement that night, being already weary and exhausted, they sided with Mr. Tappertit, and pressed him to make haste with his supper, for they had already delayed too long. Knowing, even in the height of his frenzy, that they incurred great danger by lingering so near the scene of the late outrages, Hugh made an end of his meal without more remonstrance, and rising, stepped up to Mr. Tappertit and smote him on the back.

"Now then," he cried, "I'm ready. There are brave birds inside this cage, eh? Delicate birds, — tender, loving, little doves. I caged 'em — I caged 'em — one more peep!"

He thrust the little man aside as he spoke, and mounting on the steps which were half let down, pulled down the blind by force, and stared into the chaise like an ogre into his larder.

"Ha, ha, ha! and did you scratch, and pinch, and struggle, pretty mistress?" he cried, as he grasped a little hand that sought in vain to free itself from his grip: "you, so bright-eyed, and cherry-lipped, and daintily made? But I love you better for it, mistress. Ay, I do. You should stab me and welcome, so that it pleased you, and you had to cure me afterwards. I love to see you proud and scornful. It makes you handsomer than ever; and who so handsome as you at any time, my pretty one!"

"Come!" said Mr. Tappertit, who had waited during this speech with considerable impatience. "There's enough of that. Come down."

The little hand seconded this admonition by thrusting Hugh's great head away with all its force, and drawing up the blind, amidst his noisy laughter, and vows that he must have another look, for the last glimpse of that sweet face had provoked him past all bearing. However, as the suppressed impatience of the party now broke out into open murmurs, he abandoned this design, and taking his seat upon the bar, contented himself with tapping at the front windows of the carriage, and trying to steal a glance inside; Mr. Tappertit mounting the steps and hanging on by the door, issued his directions to the driver with a commanding voice and attitude; the rest got up behind, or ran by the side of the carriage, as they could; some, in imitation of Hugh, endeavored to see the face he had praised so highly, and were reminded of their impertinence by hints from the cudgel of Mr. Tappertit. Thus they pursued their journey by circuitous and winding roads; preserving, except when they halted to take breath, or to quarrel about the best way of reaching London, pretty good order and tolerable silence.

In the mean time, Dolly — beautiful, bewitching, captivating little Dolly — her hair dishevelled, her dress torn, her dark eyelashes wet with tears, her bosom heaving — her face, now pale with fear, now crimsoned with indignation — her whole self a hundred times more beautiful in this heightened aspect than ever she had been before — vainly strove to comfort Emma Haredale, and to impart to her the consolation of which she stood in so much need herself. The soldiers were sure to come; they must be rescued; it would be impossible to convey them through the streets of London, when they set the threats of their guards at defiance, and shrieked to the passengers for help. If they did this, when they came into the more frequented ways, she was certain — she was quite certain — they must be released. So poor Dolly said, and so poor Dolly tried to think; but the invariable conclusion of all such arguments was, that Dolly burst into tears; cried, as she wrung her hands, what would they do or think, or who would comfort them, at home, at the Golden Key; and sobbed most piteously.

Miss Haredale, whose feelings were usually of a quieter kind than Dolly's, and not so much upon the surface, was dreadfully alarmed, and indeed had only just recovered from a swoon. She was very pale, and the hand which Dolly held was quite cold; but she bade her, nevertheless, remember that, under Providence, much must depend upon their own discretion; that if they remained quiet and lulled the vigilance of the ruffians into whose hands they had fallen, the chances of their being able to procure assistance when they reached the town, were very much increased; that unless society were quite unhinged, a hot pursuit must be

immediately commenced ; and that her uncle, she might be sure, would never rest until he had found them out and rescued them. But as she said these latter words, the idea that he had fallen in a general massacre of the Catholics that night — no very wild or improbable supposition, after what they had seen and undergone — struck her dumb ; and, lost in the horrors they had witnessed, and those they might be yet reserved for, she sat incapable of thought, or speech, or outward show of grief : as rigid, and almost as white and cold, as marble.

Oh, how many many times, in that long ride, did Dolly think of her old lover — poor, fond, slighted Joe ! How many, many times, did she recall that night when she ran into his arms from the very man now projecting his hateful gaze into the darkness where she sat, and leering through the glass, in monstrous admiration ! And when she thought of Joe, and what a brave fellow he was, and how he would have rode boldly up, and dashed in among these villains now, yes, though they were double the number — and here she clinched her little hand, and pressed her foot upon the ground — the pride she felt for a moment in having won his heart, faded in a burst of tears, and she sobbed more bitterly than ever.

As the night wore on, and they proceeded by ways which were quite unknown to them — for they could recognize none of the objects of which they sometimes caught a hurried glimpse — their fears increased ; nor were they without good foundation ; it was not difficult for two beautiful young women to find, in their being borne they knew not whither, by a band of daring villains who eyed them as some among these fellows did, reasons for the worst alarm. When they at last entered

London by a suburb with which they were wholly unacquainted, it was past midnight, and the streets were dark and empty. Nor was this the worst, for the carriage stopping in a lonely spot, Hugh suddenly opened the door, jumped in, and took his seat between them.

It was in vain they cried for help. He put his arm about the neck of each, and swore to stifle them with kisses if they were not as silent as the grave.

"I come here to keep you quiet," he said, "and that's the means I shall take. So don't be quiet, pretty mistresses — make a noise — do — and I shall like it all the better."

They were proceeding at a rapid pace, and apparently with fewer attendants than before, though it was so dark (the torches being extinguished) that this was mere conjecture. They shrunk from his touch, each into the farthest corner of the carriage; but shrink as Dolly would, his arm encircled her waist, and held her fast. She neither cried nor spoke, for terror and disgust deprived her of the power; but she plucked at his hand as though she would die in the effort to disengage herself; and crouching on the ground, with her head averted and held down, repelled him with a strength she wondered at as much as he. The carriage stopped again.

"Lift this one out," said Hugh to the man who opened the door, as he took Miss Haredale's hand, and felt how heavily it fell. "She's fainted."

"So much the better," growled Dennis — it was the amiable gentleman. "She's quiet. I always like 'em to faint, unless they're very tender and composed."

"Can you take her by yourself?" asked Hugh.

"I don't know till I try. I ought to be able to; I've lifted up a good many in my time," said the hangman

"Up then! She's no small weight, brother; none of these here fine gals are. Up again! Now we have her."

Having by this time hoisted the young lady into his arms, he staggered off with his burden.

"Look ye, pretty bird," said Hugh, drawing Dolly towards him. "Remember what I told you — a kiss for every cry. Scream, if you love me, darling. Scream once, mistress. Pretty mistress, only once, if you love me."

Thrusting his face away with all her force, and holding down her head, Dolly submitted to be carried out of the chaise, and borne after Miss Haredale into a miserable cottage, where Hugh, after hugging her to his breast, set her gently down upon the floor.

Poor Dolly! do what she would, she only looked the better for it, and tempted them the more. When her eyes flashed angrily, and her ripe lips slightly parted, to give her rapid breathing vent, who could resist it? When she wept and sobbed as though her heart would break, and bemoaned her miseries in the sweetest voice that ever fell upon a listener's ear, who could be insensible to the little winning pettishness which now and then displayed itself even in the sincerity and earnestness of her grief? When, forgetful for a moment of herself, as she was now, she fell on her knees beside her friend, and went over her, and laid her cheek to hers, and put her arms about her, what mortal eyes could have avoided wandering to the delicate bodice, the streaming hair, the neglected dress, the perfect abandonment and unconsciousness of the blooming little beauty? Who could look on and see her lavish caresses and endearments, and not desire to be in Emma Haredale's place; to

be either her or Dolly; either the hugging or the hugged? Not Hugh. Not Dennis.

"I tell you what it is, young women," said Mr Dennis, "I a'n't much of a lady's man myself, nor am I a party in the present business further than 'ending a willing hand to my friends: but if I see much more of this here sort of thing, I shall become a principal instead of a accessory. I tell you candid."

"Why have you brought us here?" said Emma. "Are we to be murdered?"

"Murdered!" cried Dennis, sitting down upon a stool, and regarding her with great favor. "Why, my dear, who'd murder sich chickabiddies as you? If you was to ask me, now, whether you was brought here to be married, there might be something in it."

And here he exchanged a grin with Hugh, who removed his eyes from Dolly for the purpose.

"No, no," said Dennis, "there'll be no murdering, my pets. Nothing of that sort. Quite the contrary."

"You are an older man than your companion, sir," said Emma, trembling. "Have you no pity for us? Do you not consider that we are women?"

"I do indeed, my dear," retorted Dennis. "It would be very hard not to, with two such specimens afore my eyes. Ha, ha! Oh yes, I consider that. We all consider that, miss."

He shook his head waggishly, leered at Hugh again, and laughed very much, as if he had said a noble thing, and rather thought he was coming out.

"There'll be no murdering, my dear. Not a bit on it. I tell you what though, brother," said Dennis, cocking his hat for the convenience of scratching his head, and looking gravely at Hugh, "it's worthy of notice, as a

proof of the amazing equalness and dignity of our law, that it don't make no distinction between men and women. I've heerd the judge say, sometimes to a highwayman or house-breaker as had tied the ladies neck and heels — you'll excuse me making mention of it, my darlings — and put 'em in a cellar, that he showed no consideration to women. Now, I say that there judge didn't know his business, brother; and that if I had been that there highwayman or house-breaker, I should have made answer: 'What are you a-talking of, my lord? I showed the women as much consideration as the law does, and what more would you have me do?' If you was to count up in the newspapers the number of females as have been worked off in this here city alone, in the last ten year," said Mr. Dennis thoughtfully, "you'd be surprised at the total — quite amazed, you would. There's a dignified and equal thing; a beautiful thing! But we've no security for its lasting. Now that they've begun to favor these here Papists, I shouldn't wonder if they went and altered even *that*, one of these days. Upon my soul, I shouldn't."

This subject, perhaps from being of too exclusive and professional a nature, failed to interest Hugh as much as his friend had anticipated. But he had no time to pursue it, for at this crisis, Mr. Tappertit entered precipitately; at sight of whom Dolly uttered a scream of joy, and fairly threw herself into his arms.

"I knew it, I was sure of it!" cried Dolly. "My dear father's at the door. Thank God, thank God! Bless you, Sim. Heaven bless you for this!"

Simon Tappertit, who had at first implicitly believed that the locksmith's daughter, unable any longer to suppress her secret passion for himself, was about to give

it full vent in its intensity, and to declare that she was his forever, looked extremely foolish when she said these words; — the more so, as they were received by Hugh and Dennis with a loud laugh, which made her draw back, and regard him with a fixed and earnest look.

“Miss Haredale,” said Sim, after a very awkward silence, “I hope you’re as comfortable as circumstances will permit of. Dolly Varden, my darling — my own, my lovely one — I hope *you’re* pretty comfortable likewise.”

Poor little Dolly! She saw how it was; hid her face in her hands; and sobbed more bitterly than ever.

“You meet in me, Miss V.,” said Simon, laying his hand upon his breast, “not a ’prentice, not a workman, not a slave, not the victim of your father’s tyrannical behavior, but the leader of a great people, the captain of a noble band, in which these gentlemen are, as I may say, corporals and sergeants. You behold in me, not a private individual, but a public character; not a mender of locks, but a healer of the wounds of his unhappy country. Dolly V., sweet Dolly V., for how many years have I looked forward to this present meeting! For how many years has it been my intention to exalt and ennoble you! I redeem it. Behold in me, your husband. Yes, beautiful Dolly — charmer — enslaver — S. Tappertit is all your own!”

As he said these words he advanced towards her. Dolly retreated till she could go no farther, and then sank down upon the floor. Thinking it very possible that this might be maiden modesty, Simon essayed to raise her; on which Dolly, goaded to desperation, wound

her hands in his hair, and crying out amidst her tears that he was a dreadful little wretch, and always had been, shook, and pulled, and beat him, until he was fain to call for help, most lustily. Hugh had never admired her half so much as at that moment.

"She's in an excited state to-night," said Simon, as he smoothed his rumpled feathers, "and don't know when she's well off. Let her be by herself till to-morrow, and that'll bring her down a little. Carry her into the next house!"

Hugh had her in his arms directly. It might be that Mr. Tappertit's heart was really softened by her distress, or it might be that he felt it in some degree indecorous that his intended bride should be struggling in the grasp of another man. He commanded him, on second thoughts, to put her down again, and looked moodily on as she flew to Miss Haredale's side, and clinging to her dress, hid her flushed face in its folds.

"They shall remain here together till to-morrow," said Simon, who had now quite recovered his dignity — till to-morrow. Come away!"

"Ay!" cried Hugh. "Come away, captain. Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you laughing at?" demanded Simon sternly.

"Nothing, captain, nothing," Hugh rejoined; and as he spoke, and clapped his hand upon the shoulder of the little man, he laughed again, for some unknown reason, with tenfold violence.

Mr. Tappertit surveyed him from head to foot with lofty scorn (this only made him laugh the more), and turning to the prisoners, said:—

"You'll take notice ladies, that this place is well



watched on every side, and that the least noise is certain to be attended with unpleasant consequences. You'll hear — both of you — more of our intentions to-morrow. In the mean time, don't show yourselves at the window, or appeal to any of the people you may see pass it; for if you do, it'll be known directly that you come from a Catholic house, and all the exertions our men can make, may not be able to save your lives."

With this last caution, which was true enough, he turned to the door, followed by Hugh and Dennis. They paused for a moment, going out, to look at them clasped in each other's arms, and then left the cottage; fastening the door, and setting a good watch upon it, and indeed all round the house.

"I say," growled Dennis, as they walked away in company, "that's a dainty pair. Muster Gashford's one is as handsome as the other, eh?"

"Hush!" said Hugh, hastily. "Don't you mention names. It's a bad habit."

"I wouldn't like to be *him*, then (as you don't like names), when he breaks it out to her; that's all," said Dennis. "She's one of them fine, black-eyed, proud gals, as I wouldn't trust at such times with a knife too near 'em. I've seen some of that sort, afore now. I recollect one that was worked off, many year ago — and there was a gentleman in that case too — that says to me, with her lip a-trembling, but her hand as steady as ever I see one; 'Dennis, I'm near my end, but if I had a dagger in these fingers, and he was within my reach, I'd strike him dead afore me;' — ah, she did — and she'd have done it too!"

"Strike who dead?" demanded Hugh.

"How should I know, brother?" answered Dennis. "*She* never said; not she."

Hugh looked, for a moment, as though he would have made some further inquiry into this incoherent recollection; but Simon Tappertit, who had been meditating deeply, gave his thoughts a new direction.

"Hugh!" said Sim. "You have done well to-day. You shall be rewarded. So have you, Dennis.—There's no young woman *you* want to carry off, is there?"

"N—no," returned that gentleman, stroking his grizzled beard, which was some two inches long. "None in partickler, I think."

"Very good," said Sim; "then we'll find some other way of making it up to you. As to you, old boy"—he turned to Hugh—"you shall have Miggs (her that I promised you, you know) within three days. Mind, I pass my word for it."

Hugh thanked him heartily; and as he did so, his laughing fit returned with such violence that he was obliged to hold his side with one hand, and to lean with the other on the shoulder of his small captain, without whose support he would certainly have rolled upon the ground.

CHAPTER LX.

THE three worthies turned their faces towards The Boot, with the intention of passing the night in that place of rendezvous, and of seeking the repose they so much needed in the shelter of their old den ; for now that the mischief and destruction they had purposed were achieved, and their prisoners were safely bestowed for the night, they began to be conscious of exhaustion, and to feel the wasting effects of the madness which had led to such deplorable results.

Notwithstanding the lassitude and fatigue which oppressed him now, in common with his two companions, and indeed with all who had taken an active share in that night's work, Hugh's boisterous merriment broke out afresh whenever he looked at Simon Tappertit, and vented itself — much to that gentleman's indignation — in such shouts of laughter as bade fair to bring the watch upon them, and involve them in a skirmish, to which in their present worn-out condition they might prove by no means equal. Even Mr. Dennis, who was not at all particular on the score of gravity or dignity, and who had a great relish for his young friend's eccentric humors, took occasion to remonstrate with him on this imprudent behavior, which he held to be a species of suicide, tantamount to a man's working himself off without being overtaken by the law, than which he could imagine nothing more ridiculous or impertinent.

Not abating one jot of his noisy mirth for these remonstrances, Hugh reeled along between them, having an arm of each, until they hove in sight of The Boot, and were within a field or two of that convenient tavern. He happened by great good luck to have roared and shouted himself into silence by this time. They were proceeding onward without noise, when a scout who had been creeping about the ditches all night, to warn any stragglers from encroaching farther on what was now such dangerous ground, peeped cautiously from his hiding-place, and called to them to stop.

“Stop! and why?” said Hugh.

Because (the scout replied) the house was filled with constables and soldiers; having been surprised that afternoon. The inmates had fled or been taken into custody, he could not say which. He had prevented a great many people from approaching nearer, and he believed they had gone to the markets and such places to pass the night. He had seen the distant fires, but they were all out now. He had heard the people who passed and repassed, speaking of them too, and could report that the prevailing opinion was one of apprehension and dismay. He had not heard a word of Barnaby — didn’t even know his name — but it had been said in his hearing that some man had been taken and carried off to Newgate. Whether this was true or false he could not affirm.

The three took counsel together, on hearing this, and debated what it might be best to do. Hugh, deeming it possible that Barnaby was in the hands of the soldiers, and at that moment under detention at The Boot, was for advancing stealthily, and firing the house; but his companions, who objected to such rash measures unless they had a crowd at their backs, represented that if Bar-

naby were taken he had assuredly been removed to a stronger prison; they would never have dreamed, he said, of keeping him all night in a place so weak and open to attack. Yielding to this reasoning, and to their persuasions, Hugh consented to turn back, and to repair to Fleet Market; for which place, it seemed, a few of their boldest associates had shaped their course, on receiving the same intelligence.

Feeling their strength recruited and their spirits roused, now that there was a new necessity for action, they hurried away, quite forgetful of the fatigue under which they had been sinking but a few minutes before; and soon arrived at their place of destination.

Fleet Market, at that time, was a long irregular row of wooden sheds and pent-houses, occupying the centre of what is now called Farringdon Street. They were jumbled together in a most unsightly fashion, in the middle of the road; to the great obstruction of the thoroughfare and the annoyance of passengers, who were fain to make their way, as they best could, among carts, baskets, barrows, trucks, casks, bulks, and benches, and to jostle with porters, hucksters, wagoners, and a motley crowd of buyers, sellers, pickpockets, vagrants, and idlers. The air was perfumed with the stench of rotten leaves and faded fruit; the refuse of the butchers' stalls, and offal and garbage of a hundred kinds. It was indispensable to most public conveniences in those days, that they should be public nuisances likewise; and Fleet Market maintained the principle to admiration.

To this place, perhaps because its sheds and baskets were a tolerable substitute for beds, or perhaps because it afforded the means of a hasty barricade in case of need,

many of the rioters had straggled not only that night, but for two or three nights before. It was now broad day, but the morning being cold, a group of them were gathered round a fire in a public-house, drinking hot purl, and smoking pipes, and planning new schemes for to-morrow.

Hugh and his two friends being known to most of these men, were received with signal marks of approbation, and inducted into the most honorable seats. The room-door was closed and fastened to keep intruders at a distance, and then they proceeded to exchange news.

"The soldiers have taken possession of The Boot, I hear," said Hugh. "Who knows anything about it?"

Several cried that they did; but the majority of the company having been engaged in the assault upon the Warren, and all present having been concerned in one or other of the night's expeditions, it proved that they knew no more than Hugh himself; having been merely warned by each other, or by the scout, and knowing nothing of their own knowledge.

"We left a man on guard there to-day," said Hugh, looking round him, "who is not here." You know who it is — Barnaby, who brought the soldier down, at Westminster. Has any man seen or heard of him?"

They shook their heads, and murmured an answer in the negative, as each man looked round and appealed to his fellow; when a noise was heard without, and a man was heard to say that he wanted Hugh — that he must see Hugh.

"He is but one man," cried Hugh to those who kept the door; "let him come in."

"Ay, ay!" muttered the others. "Let him come in. Let him come in."

The door was accordingly unlocked and opened. A one-armed man, with his head and face tied up with a bloody cloth as though he had been severely beaten, his clothes torn, and his remaining hand grasping a thick stick, rushed in among them, and panting for breath, demanded which was Hugh.

"Here he is," replied the person he inquired for. "I am Hugh. What do you want with me?"

"I have a message for you," said the man. "You know one Barnaby."

"What of him? Did he send the message?"

"Yes. He's taken. He's in one of the strong cells in Newgate. He defended himself as well as he could, but was overpowered by numbers. That's his message."

"When did you see him?" asked Hugh, hastily.

"On his way to prison, where he was taken by a party of soldiers. They took a by-road, and not the one we expected. I was one of the few who tried to rescue him, and he called to me, and told me to tell Hugh where he was. We made a good struggle, though it failed. Look here!"

He pointed to his dress and to his bandaged head, and still panting for breath, glanced round the room; then faced towards Hugh again.

"I know you by sight," he said, "for I was in the crowd on Friday, and on Saturday, and yesterday, but I didn't know your name. You're a bold fellow, I know. So is he. He fought like a lion to-night, but it was of no use. I did my best, considering that I want this limb."

Again he glanced inquisitively round the room — or seemed to do so, for his face was nearly hidden by the

bandage — and again facing sharply towards Hugh, grasped his stick as if he half expected to be set upon, and stood on the defensive.

If he had any such apprehension, however, he was speedily reassured by the demeanor of all present. None thought of the bearer of the tidings. He was lost in the news he brought. Oaths, threats, and execrations were vented on all sides. 'Some cried that if they bore this tamely, another day would see them all in jail; some, that they should have rescued the other prisoners, and this would not have happened. One man cried in a loud voice, "Who'll follow me to Newgate!" and there was a loud shout and a general rush towards the door.

But Hugh and Dennis stood with their backs against it, and kept them back, until the clamor had so far subsided that their voices could be heard, when they called to them together that to go now, in broad day, would be madness; and that if they waited until night and arranged a plan of attack, they might release, not only their own companions, but all the prisoners, and burn down the jail.

"Not that jail alone," cried Hugh, "but every jail in London. They shall have no place to put their prisoners in. We'll burn them all down; make bonfires of them every one! Here!" he cried, catching at the hangman's hand. "Let all who're men here join with us. Shake hands upon it. Barnaby out of jail, and not a jail left standing! Who joins?"

Every man there. And they swore a great oath to release their friends from Newgate next night; to force the doors and burn the jail; or perish in the fire themselves.

CHAPTER LXI.

ON that same night — events so crowd upon each other in convulsed and distracted times, that more than the stirring incidents of a whole life often become compressed into the compass of four-and-twenty hours — on that same night, Mr. Haredale, having strongly bound his prisoner, with the assistance of the sexton, and forced him to mount his horse, conducted him to Chigwell; bent upon procuring a conveyance to London from that place, and carrying him at once before a Justice. The disturbed state of the town would be, he knew, a sufficient reason for demanding the murderer's committal to prison before daybreak, as no man could answer for the security of any of the watch-houses or ordinary places of detention; and to convey a prisoner through the streets when the mob were again abroad, would not only be a task of great danger and hazard, but would be to challenge an attempt at rescue. Directing the sexton to lead the horse, he walked close by the murderer's side, and in this order they reached the village about the middle of the night.

The people were all awake and up, for they were fearful of being burnt in their beds, and sought to comfort and assure each other by watching in company. A few of the stoutest-hearted were armed and gathered in a body on the green. To these who knew him well, Mr. Haredale addressed himself, briefly narrating what had

happened, and beseeching them to aid in conveying the criminal to London before the dawn of day.

But not a man among them dared to help him by so much as the motion of a finger. The rioters, in their passage through the village, had menaced with their fiercest vengeance any person who should aid in extinguishing the fire, or render the least assistance to him, or any catholic whomsoever. Their threats extended to their lives and all that they possessed. They were assembled for their own protection, and could not endanger themselves by lending any aid to him. This they told him, not without hesitation and regret, as they kept aloof in the moonlight and glanced fearfully at the ghostly rider, who, with his head drooping on his breast and his hat slouched down upon his brow, neither moved nor spoke.

Finding it impossible to persuade them, and indeed hardly knowing how to do so after what they had seen of the fury of the crowd, Mr. Haredale besought them that at least they would leave him free to act for himself, and would suffer him to take the only chaise and pair of horses that the place afforded. This was not acceded to without some difficulty, but in the end they told him to do what he would, and go away from them in Heaven's name.

Leaving the sexton at the horse's bridle, he drew out the chaise with his own hands, and would have harnessed the horses, but that the post-boy of the village — a soft-hearted, good-for-nothing, vagabond kind of fellow — was moved by his earnestness and passion, and, throwing down a pitchfork with which he was armed, swore that the rioters might cut him into mince-meat if they liked, but he would not stand by and see an honest gentleman

who had done no wrong, reduced to such extremity, without doing what he could to help him. Mr. Haredale shook him warmly by the hand, and thanked him from his heart. In five minutes' time the chaise was ready, and this good scapegrace in his saddle. The murderer was put inside, the blinds were drawn up, the sexton took his seat upon the bar, Mr. Haredale mounted his horse and rode close beside the door; and so they started in the dead of night, and in profound silence, for London.

The consternation was so extreme that even the horses which had escaped the flames at the Warren, could find no friends to shelter them. They passed them on the road, browsing on the stunted grass; and the driver told them, that the poor beasts had wandered to the village first, but had been driven away lest they should bring the vengeance of the crowd on any of the inhabitants.

Nor was this feeling confined to such small places, where the people were timid, ignorant, and unprotected. When they came near London they met in the gray light of morning, more than one poor catholic family who, terrified by the threats and warnings of their neighbors, were quitting the city on foot, and who told them they could hire no cart or horse for the removal of their goods, and had been compelled to leave them behind, at the mercy of the crowd. Near Mile-end they passed a house, the master of which, a catholic gentleman of small means, having hired a wagon to remove his furniture by midnight, had had it all brought down into the street to wait the vehicle's arrival, and save time in the packing. But the man with whom he made the bargain, alarmed by the fires that night, and by the sight of the rioters passing his door, had refused to keep

it: and the poor gentleman, with his wife and servant and their little children, were sitting trembling among their goods in the open street, dreading the arrival of day, and not knowing where to turn or what to do.

It was the same, they heard, with the public conveyances. The panic was so great that the mails and stage-coaches were afraid to carry passengers who professed the obnoxious religion. If the drivers knew them, or they admitted that they held that creed, they would not take them, no, though they offered large sums; and yesterday, people had been afraid to recognize catholic acquaintance in the streets, lest they should be marked by spies, and burnt out, as it was called, in consequence. One mild old man — a priest, whose chapel was destroyed; a very feeble, patient, inoffensive creature — who was trudging away, alone, designing to walk some distance from town, and then try his fortune with the coaches, told Mr. Haredale that he feared he might not find a magistrate who would have the hardihood to commit a prisoner to jail, on his complaint. But notwithstanding these discouraging accounts they went on, and reached the Mansion House soon after sunrise.

Mr. Haredale threw himself from his horse, but he had no need to knock at the door, for it was already open, and there stood upon the step a portly old man, with a very red, or rather purple face, who with an anxious expression of countenance, was remonstrating with some unseen person up-stairs, while the porter essayed to close the door by degrees and get rid of him. With the intense impatience and excitement natural to one in his condition, Mr. Haredale thrust himself forward and was about to speak, when the fat old gentleman interposed:

"My good sir," said he, "pray let me get an answer. This is the sixth time I have been here. I was here five times yesterday. My house is threatened with destruction. It is to be burned down to-night, and was to have been last night, but they had other business on their hands. Pray let me get an answer."

"My good sir," returned Mr. Haredale, shaking his head, "my house is burned to the ground. But Heaven forbid that yours should be. Get your answer. Be brief, in mercy to me."

"Now, you hear this, my lord?" — said the old gentleman, calling up the stairs, to where the skirt of a dressing-gown fluttered on the landing-place. "Here is a gentleman here, whose house was actually burnt down last night."

"Dear me, dear me," replied a testy voice, "I am very sorry for it, but what am I to do? I can't build it up again. The chief magistrate of the city can't go and be a-rebuilding of people's houses, my good sir. Stuff and nonsense!"

"But the chief magistrate of the city can prevent people's houses from having any need to be rebuilt, if the chief magistrate's a man, and not a dummy — can't he, my lord?" cried the old gentleman in a choleric manner.

"You are disrespectful, sir," said the Lord Mayor — "leastways, disrespectful I mean."

"Disrespectful, my lord!" returned the old gentleman "I was respectful five times yesterday. I can't be respectful forever. Men can't stand on being respectful when their houses are going to be burnt over their heads, with them in 'em. What am I to do, my lord? *Am I to have any protection!*"

"I told you yesterday, sir," said the Lord Mayor, "that you might have an alderman in your house, if you could get one to come."

"What the devil's the good of an alderman?" returned the choleric old gentleman.

"— To awe the crowd, sir," said the Lord Mayor.

"Oh Lord ha' mercy!" whimpered the old gentleman, as he wiped his forehead in a state of ludicrous distress, "to think of sending an alderman to awe a crowd! Why, my lord, if they were even so many babies, fed on mother's milk, what do you think they'd care for an alderman! Will *you* come?"

"I!" said the Lord Mayor, most emphatically: "Certainly not."

"Then what," returned the old gentleman, "what am I to do? Am I a citizen of England? Am I to have the benefit of the laws? Am I to have any return for the King's taxes?"

"I don't know, I am sure," said the Lord Mayor; "what a pity it is you're a catholic! Why couldn't you be a protestant, and then you wouldn't have got yourself into such a mess? I'm sure I don't know what's to be done. — There are great people at the bottom of these riots. — Oh dear me, what a thing it is to be a public character! — You must look in again in the course of the day. — Would a javelin-man do? — Or there's Philips the constable, — *he's* disengaged, — he's not very old for a man at his time of life, except in his legs, and if you put him up at a window he'd look quite young by candle-light, and might frighten 'em very much. — Oh dear! — well, — we'll see about it."

"Stop!" cried Mr. Haredale, pressing the door open as the porter strove to shut it, and speaking rapidly

"My Lord Mayor, I beg you not to go away. I have a man here, who committed a murder eight-and-twenty years ago. Half a dozen words from me, on oath, will justify you in committing him to prison, for reëxamination. I only seek, just now, to have him consigned to a place of safety. The least delay may involve his being rescued by the rioters."

"Oh dear me!" cried the Lord Mayor. "God bless my soul — and body — oh Lor! — well I! — there are great people at the bottom of these riots, you know. — You really mustn't."

"My lord," said Mr. Haredale, "the murdered gentleman was my brother; I succeeded to his inheritance; there were not wanting slanderous tongues at that time, to whisper that the guilt of this most foul and cruel deed was mine — mine, who loved him, as he knows, in Heaven, dearly. The time has come, after all these years of gloom and misery, for avenging him, and bringing to light a crime so artful and so devilish that it has no parallel. Every second's delay on your part loosens this man's bloody hands again, and leads to his escape. My lord, I charge you hear me, and despatch this matter on the instant."

"Oh dear me!" cried the chief magistrate; "these a'n't business hours, you know — I wonder at you — how ungentlemanly it is of you — you mustn't — you really mustn't. — And I suppose *you* are a catholic too?"

"I am," said Mr. Haredale.

"God bless my soul, I believe people turn catholics a' purpose to vex and worrit me," cried the Lord Mayor. 'I wish you wouldn't come here; they'll be setting the Mansion House afire next, and we shall have you to

thank for it. You must lock your prisoner up, sir — give him to a watchman — and — and call again at a proper time. Then we'll see about it!"

Before Mr. Haredale could answer, the sharp closing of a door and drawing of its bolts, gave notice that the Lord Mayor had retreated to his bedroom, and that further remonstrance would be unavailing. The two clients retreated likewise, and the porter shut them out into the street.

"That's the way he puts me off," said the old gentleman, "I can get no redress and no help. What are you going to do, sir?"

"To try elsewhere," answered Mr. Haredale, who was by this time on horseback.

"I feel for you, I assure you — and well I may, for we are in a common cause," said the old gentleman. "I may not have a house to offer you to-night; let me tender it while I can. On second thoughts though," he added, putting up a pocket-book he had produced while speaking, "I'll not give you a card, for if it was found upon you, it might get you into trouble. Langdale — that's my name — vintner and distiller — Holborn Hill — you're heartily welcome, if you'll come."

Mr. Haredale bowed, and rode off, close beside the chaise as before; determining to repair to the house of Sir John Fielding, who had the reputation of being a bold and active magistrate, and fully resolved, in case the rioters should come upon them, to do execution on the murderer with his own hands, rather than suffer him to be released.

They arrived at the magistrate's dwelling, however, without molestation (for the mob, as we have seen, were then intent on deeper schemes), and knocked at the

door. As it had been pretty generally rumored that Sir John was proscribed by the rioters, a body of thief-takers had been keeping watch in the house all night. To one of them, Mr. Haredale stated his business, which appearing to the man of sufficient moment to warrant his arousing the justice, procured him an immediate audience.

No time was lost in committing the murderer to Newgate; then a new building, recently completed at a vast expense, and considered to be of enormous strength. The warrant being made out, three of the thief-takers bound him afresh (he had been struggling, it seemed, in the chaise, and had loosened his manacles); gagged him lest they should meet with any of the mob, and he should call to them for help; and seated themselves along with him in the carriage. These men being all well armed, made a formidable escort; but they drew up the blinds again, as though the carriage were empty, and directed Mr. Haredale to ride forward, that he might not attract attention by seeming to belong to it.

The wisdom of this proceeding was sufficiently obvious, for as they hurried through the city they passed among several groups of men, who, if they had not supposed the chaise to be quite empty, would certainly have stopped it. But those within keeping quite close, and the driver tarrying to be asked no questions, they reached the prison without interruption, and, once there, had him out, and safe within its gloomy walls, in a twinkling.

With eager eyes and strained attention, Mr. Haredale saw him chained, and locked and barred up in his cell. Nay, when he had left the jail, and stood in the free street, without, he felt the iron plates upon the doors,

with his hands, and drew them over the stone wall, to assure himself that it was real ; and to exult in its being so strong, and rough, and cold. It was not until he turned his back upon the jail, and glanced along the empty streets, so lifeless and quiet in the bright morning, that he felt the weight upon his heart ; that he knew he was tortured by anxiety for those he had left at home ; and that home itself was but another bead in the long rosary of his regrets.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE prisoner, left to himself, sat down upon his bedstead : and resting his elbows on his knees, and his chin upon his hands, remained in that attitude for hours. It would be hard to say, of what nature his reflections were. They had no distinctness, and, saving for some flashes now and then, no reference to his condition or the train of circumstances by which it had been brought about. The cracks in the pavement of his cell, the chinks in the wall where stone was joined to stone, the bars in the window, the iron ring upon the floor, — such things as these, subsiding strangely into one another, and awakening an indescribable kind of interest and amusement, engrossed his whole mind ; and although at the bottom of his every thought there was an uneasy sense of guilt, and dread of death, he felt no more than that vague consciousness of it, which a sleeper has of pain. It pursues him through his dreams, gnaws at the heart of all his fancied pleasures, robs the banquet of its taste, music of its sweetness, makes happiness itself unhappy, and yet is no bodily sensation, but a phantom without shape, or form, or visible presence ; pervading everything, but having no existence ; recognizable everywhere, but nowhere seen or touched, or met with face to face, until the sleep is past, and waking agony returns.

After a long time, the door of his cell opened. He

looked up; saw the blind man enter; and relapsed into his former position.

Guided by his breathing, the visitor advanced to where he sat; and stopping beside him, and stretching out his hand to assure himself that he was right, remained, for a good space, silent.

"This is bad, Rudge. This is bad," he said at length.

The prisoner shuffled with his feet upon the ground in turning his body from him, but made no other answer.

"How were you taken?" he asked. "And where? You never told me more than half your secret. No matter; I know it now. How was it, and where, eh?" he asked again, coming still nearer to him.

"At Chigwell," said the other.

"At Chigwell! How came you there?"

"Because I went there, to avoid the man I stumbled on," he answered. "Because I was chased and driven there, by him and Fate. Because I was urged to go there, by something stronger than my own will. When I found him watching in the house she used to live in, night after night, I knew I never could escape him — never! and when I heard the Bell" —

He shivered; muttered that it was very cold; paced quickly up and down the narrow cell; and sitting down again, fell into his old posture.

"You were saying," said the blind man, after another pause, "that when you heard the Bell" —

"Let it be, will you?" he retorted in a hurried voice. "It hangs there yet."

The blind man turned a wistful and inquisitive face towards him, but he continued to speak, without noticing him.

"I went to Chigwell, in search of the mob. I have



been so hunted and beset by this man, that I knew my only hope of safety lay in joining them. They had gone on before; I followed them when it left off."

"When what left off?"

"The Bell. They had quitted the place. I hoped that some of them might be still lingering among the ruins, and was searching for them when I heard" — he drew a long breath, and wiped his forehead with his sleeve — "his voice."

"Saying what?"

"No matter what. I don't know. I was then at the foot of the turret, where I did the" —

"Ay," said the blind man, nodding his head with perfect composure, "I understand."

"I climbed the stair, or so much of it as was left; meaning to hide till he had gone. But he heard me; and followed almost as soon as I set foot upon the ashes."

"You might have hidden in the wall, and thrown him down, or stabbed him," said the blind man.

"Might I? Between that man and me, was one who led him on — I saw it, though he did not — and raised above his head a bloody hand. It was in the room above that *he* and I stood glaring at each other on the night of the murder, and before he fell he raised his hand like that, and fixed his eyes on me. I knew the chase would end there."

"You have a strong fancy," said the blind man, with smile.

"Strengthen yours with blood, and see what it will come to."

He groaned, and rocked himself, and looking up for the first time, said, in a low, hollow voice: —

"Eight-and-twenty years! Eight-and-twenty years!"

He has never changed in all that time, never grown older, nor altered in the least degree. He has been before me in the dark night, and the broad sunny day ; in the twilight, the moonlight, the sunlight, the light of fire, and lamp, and candle ; and in the deepest gloom. Always the same ! In company, in solitude, on land, on shipboard ; sometimes leaving me alone for months, and sometimes always with me. I have seen him, at sea, come gliding in the dead of night along the bright reflection of the moon in the calm water ; and I have seen him, on quays and market-places, with his hand uplifted, towering the centre of a busy crowd, unconscious of the terrible form that had its silent stand among them. Fancy ! Are you real ? Am I ? Are these iron fetters, riveted on me by the smith's hammer, or are they fancies I can shatter at a blow ? ”

The blind man listened in silence.

“ Fancy ! Do I fancy that I killed him ? Do I fancy that as I left the chamber where he lay, I saw the face of a man peeping from a dark door, who plainly showed me by his fearful looks that he suspected what I had done ? Do I remember that I spoke fairly to him — that I drew nearer — nearer yet ; — with the hot knife in my sleeve ? Do I fancy how *he* died ? Did he stagger back into the angle of the wall into which I had hemmed him, and, bleeding inwardly, stand, not fall, a corpse before me ? Did I see him, for an instant, as I see you now, erect and on his feet — but dead ! ”

The blind man, who knew that he had risen, motioned him to sit down again upon his bedstead ; but he took no notice of the gesture.

“ It was then I thought, for the first time, of fastening the murder upon him. It was then I dressed him in my

clothes, and dragged him down the back-stairs to the piece of water. Do I remember listening to the bubbles that came rising up when I had rolled him in? Do I remember wiping the water from my face, and because the body splashed it there, in its descent, feeling as if it *must* be blood?

“Did I go home when I had done? And oh, my God! how long it took to do! Did I stand before my wife, and tell her? Did I see her fall upon the ground; and, when I stooped to raise her, did she thrust me back with a force that cast me off as if I had been a child, staining the hand with which she clasped my wrist? Is *that* fancy?

“Did she go down upon her knees, and call on Heaven to witness that she and her unborn child renounced me from that hour; and did she, in words so solemn that they turned me cold — me, fresh from the horrors my own hands had made — warn me to fly while there was time; for though she would be silent, being my wretched wife, she would not shelter me? Did I go forth that night, abjured of God and man, and anchored deep in hell, to wander at my cable’s length about the earth, and surely be drawn down at last?”

“Why did you return?” said the blind man.

“Why is blood red? I could no more help it, than I could live without breath. I struggled against the impulse, but I was drawn back, through every difficult and adverse circumstance, as by a mighty engine. Nothing could stop me. The day and hour were none of my choice. Sleeping and waking, I had been among the old haunts for years — had visited my own grave. Why did I come back? Because this jail was gaping for me, and he stood beckoning at the door.”

"You were not known?" said the blind man.

"I was a man who had been twenty-two years dead. No. I was not known."

"You should have kept your secret better."

"*My* secret? *Mine*? It was a secret, any breath of air could whisper at its will. The stars had it in their twinkling, the water in its flowing, the leaves in their rustling, the seasons in their return. It lurked in strangers' faces, and their voices. Everything had lips on which it always trembled. — *My* secret!"

"It was revealed by your own act at any rate," said the blind man.

"The act was not mine. I did it, but it was not mine. I was forced at times to wander round, and round, and round that spot. If you had chained me up when the fit was on me, I should have broken away, and gone there. As truly as the loadstone draws iron towards it, so he, lying at the bottom of his grave, could draw me near him when he would. Was that fancy? Did I like to go there, or did I strive and wrestle with the power that forced me?"

The blind man shrugged his shoulders, and smiled incredulously. The prisoner again resumed his old attitude, and for a long time both were mute.

"I suppose then," said his visitor, at length breaking silence, "that you are penitent and resigned; that you desire to make peace with everybody (in particular, with your wife who has brought you to this); and that you ask no greater favor than to be carried to Tyburn as soon as possible? That being the case, I had better take my leave. I am not good enough to be company for you."

"Have I not told you," said the other fiercely, "that

I have striven and wrestled with the power that brought me here? Has my whole life, for eight-and-twenty years, been one perpetual struggle and resistance, and do you think I want to lie down and die? Do all men shrink from death — I most of all!”

“That’s better said. That’s better spoken, Rudge — but I’ll not call you that again — than anything you have said yet,” returned the blind man, speaking more familiarly, and laying his hand upon his arm. “Look-ye, — I never killed a man myself, for I have never been placed in a position that made it worth my while. Further, I am not an advocate for killing men, and I don’t think I should recommend it or like it — for it’s very hazardous — under any circumstances. But as you had the misfortune to get into this trouble before I made your acquaintance, and as you have been my companion, and have been of use to me for a long time now, I overlook that part of the matter, and am only anxious that you shouldn’t die unnecessarily. Now, I do not consider that, at present, it is at all necessary.”

“What else is left me?” returned the prisoner. “To eat my way through these walls with my teeth?”

“Something easier than that,” returned his friend. “Promise me that you will talk no more of these fancies of yours — idle, foolish things, quite beneath a man — and I’ll tell you what I mean.”

“Tell me,” said the other.

“Your worthy lady with the tender conscience; your scrupulous, virtuous, punctilious, but not blindly affectionate wife” —

“What of her?”

“Is now in London.”

“A curse upon her, be she where she may!”

"That's natural enough. If she had taken her annuity as usual, you would not have been here, and we should have been better off. But that's apart from the business. She's in London. Scared, as I suppose, and have no doubt, by my representation when I waited upon her, that you were close at hand (which I, of course, urged only as an inducement to compliance, knowing that she was not pining to see you), she left that place, and travelled up to London."

"How do you know?"

"From my friend the noble captain—the illustrious general—the bladder, Mr. Tappertit. I learnt from him the last time I saw him, which was yesterday, that your son who is called Barnaby—not after his father I suppose"—

"Death! does that matter now!"

—"You are impatient," said the blind man calmly; "it's a good sign, and looks like life—that your son Barnaby had been lured away from her by one of his companions who knew him of old, at Chigwell; and that he is now among the rioters."

"And what is that to me? If father and son be hanged together what comfort shall I find in that?"

"Stay—stay, my friend," returned the blind man, with a cunning look, "you travel fast to journeys' ends. Suppose I track my lady out, and say thus much: 'You want your son, ma'am—good. I, knowing those who tempt him to remain among them, can restore him to you, ma'am—good. You must pay a price, ma'am, for his restoration—good again. The price is small, and easy to be paid—dear ma'am, that's best of all.'"

"What mockery is this?"

"Very likely, she may reply in those words. 'No

mockery at all,' I answer: 'Madam, a person said to be your husband (identity is difficult of proof after the lapse of many years) is in prison, his life in peril—the charge against him, murder. Now, ma'am, your husband has been dead a long, long time. The gentleman never can be confounded with him, if you will have the goodness to say a few words, on oath, as to when he died, and how; and that this person (who I am told resembles him in some degree) is no more he than I am. Such testimony will set the question quite at rest. Pledge yourself to me to give it, ma'am, and I will undertake to keep your son (a fine lad) out of harm's way until you have done this trifling service, when he shall be delivered up to you, safe and sound. On the other hand, if you decline to do so, I fear he will be betrayed, and handed over to the law, which will assuredly sentence him to suffer death. It is, in fact, a choice between his life and death. If you refuse, he swings. If you comply, the timber is not grown, nor the hemp sown, that shall do him any harm.' "

"There is a gleam of hope in this!" cried the prisoner.

"A gleam!" returned his friend, "a noon-blaze; a full and glorious daylight. Hush! I hear the tread of distant feet. Rely on me."

"When shall I hear more?"

"As soon as I do. I should hope, to-morrow. They are coming to say that our time for talk is over. I hear the jingling of the keys. Not another word of this just now, or they may overhear us."

As he said these words, the lock was turned, and one of the prison turnkeys appearing at the door, announced that it was time for visitors to leave the jail.

"So soon!" said Stagg, meekly. "But it can't be helped. Cheer up, friend. This mistake will soon be set at rest, and then you are a man again! If this charitable gentleman will lead a blind man (who has nothing in return but prayers) to the prison-porch, and set him with his face towards the west, he will do a worthy deed. Thank you, good sir. I thank you very kindly."

So saying, and pausing for an instant at the door to turn his grinning face towards his friend, he departed.

When the officer had seen him to the porch, he returned, and again unlocking and unbarring the door of the cell, set it wide open, informing its inmate that he was at liberty to walk in the adjacent yard, if he thought proper, for an hour.

The prisoner answered with a sullen nod; and being left alone again, sat brooding over what he had heard, and pondering upon the hopes the recent conversation had awakened; gazing abstractedly, the while he did so, on the light without, and watching the shadows thrown by one wall on another, and on the stone-paved ground.

It was a dull, square yard, made cold and gloomy by high walls, and seeming to chill the very sunlight. The stone, so bare, and rough, and obdurate, filled even him with longing thoughts of meadow-land and trees; and with a burning wish to be at liberty. As he looked, he rose, and leaning against the door-post, gazed up at the bright blue sky, smiling even on that dreary home of crime. He seemed, for a moment, to remember lying on his back in some sweet-scented place, and gazing at it through moving branches, long ago.

His attention was suddenly attracted by a clanking





sound — he knew what it was, for he had startled himself by making the same noise in walking to the door. Presently a voice began to sing, and he saw the shadow of a figure on the pavement. It stopped — was silent all at once, as though the person for a moment had forgotten where he was, but soon remembered — and so, with the same clanking noise, the shadow disappeared.

He walked out into the court and paced it to and fro; startling the echoes, as he went, with the harsh jangling of his fetters. There was a door near his, which, like his, stood ajar.

He had not taken half a dozen turns up and down the yard, when, standing still to observe this door, he heard the clanking sound again. A face looked out of the grated window — he saw it very dimly, for the cell was dark and the bars were heavy — and directly afterwards, a man appeared, and came towards him.

For the sense of loneliness he had, he might have been in the jail a year. Made eager by the hope of companionship, he quickened his pace, and hastened to meet the man half way —

What was this! His son!

They stood face to face, staring at each other. He shrinking and cowed, despite himself; Barnaby struggling with his imperfect memory, and wondering where he had seen that face before. He was not uncertain long, for suddenly he laid hands upon him, and striving to bear him to the ground, cried: —

“Ah! I know! You are the robber!”

He said nothing in reply at first, but held down his head, and struggled with him silently. Finding the younger man too strong for him, he raised his face, looked close into his eyes, and said: —

"I am your father."

God knows what magic the name had for his ears, but Barnaby released his hold, fell back, and looked at him aghast. Suddenly he sprung towards him, put his arms about his neck, and pressed his head against his cheek.

Yes, yes, he was ; he was sure he was. But where had he been so long, and why had he left his mother by herself, or worse than by herself, with her poor foolish boy ? And had she really been as happy as they said. And where was she ? Was she near there ? She was not happy now, and he in jail ? Ah, no.

Not a word was said in answer ; but Grip croaked loudly, and hopped about them, round and round, as if enclosing them in a magic circle, and invoking all the powers of mischief.

CHAPTER LXIII.

DURING the whole of this day, every regiment in or near the metropolis was on duty in one or other part of the town ; and the regulars and militia, in obedience to the orders which were sent to every barrack and station within twenty-four hours' journey, began to pour in by all the roads. But the disturbances had attained to such a formidable height, and the rioters had grown, with impunity, to be so audacious, that the sight of this great force, continually augmented by new arrivals, instead of operating as a check, stimulated them to outrages of greater hardihood than any they had yet committed ; and helped to kindle a flame in London, the like of which had never been beheld, even in its ancient and rebellious times.

All yesterday, and on this day likewise, the commander-in-chief endeavored to arouse the magistrates to a sense of their duty, and in particular the Lord Mayor, who was the faintest-hearted and most timid of them all. With this object, large bodies of the soldiery were several times despatched to the Mansion House to await his orders : but as he could, by no threats or persuasions, be induced to give any, and as the men remained in the open street, fruitlessly for any good purpose, and thrivingly for a very bad one ; these laudable attempts did harm rather than good. For the crowd, becoming speedily acquainted with the Lord Mayor's

temper, did not fail to take advantage of it by boasting that even the civil authorities were opposed to the Papists, and could not find it in their hearts to molest those who were guilty of no other offence. These vaunts they took care to make within the hearing of the soldiers; and they, being naturally loath to quarrel with the people, received their advances kindly enough: answering, when they were asked if they desired to fire upon their countrymen, "No, they would be damned if they did;" and showing much honest simplicity, and good-nature. The feeling that the military were No Popery men, and were ripe for disobeying orders and joining the mob, soon became very prevalent in consequence. Rumors of their disaffection, and of their leaning towards the popular cause, spread from mouth to mouth with astonishing rapidity; and whenever they were drawn up idly in the streets or squares, there was sure to be a crowd about them, cheering, and shaking hands, and treating them with a great show of confidence and affection.

By this time, the crowd was everywhere; all concealment and disguise were laid aside, and they pervaded the whole town. If any man among them wanted money, he had but to knock at the door of a dwelling-house, or walk into a shop, and demand it in the rioters' name; and his demand was instantly complied with. The peaceable citizens being afraid to lay hands upon them, singly and alone, it may be easily supposed that when gathered together in bodies, they were perfectly secure from interruption. They assembled in the streets, traversed them at their will and pleasure, and publicly concerted their plans. Business was quite suspended; the greater part of the shops were closed; most of the

houses displayed a blue flag in token of their adherence to the popular side ; and even the Jews in Houndsditch, White-chapel, and those quarters, wrote upon their doors or window-shutters "This House is a True Protestant." The crowd was the law, and never was the law held in greater dread, or more implicitly obeyed.

It was about six o'clock in the evening, when a vast mob poured into Lincoln's Inn Fields by every avenue, and divided — evidently in pursuance of a previous design — into several parties. It must not be understood that this arrangement was known to the whole crowd, but that it was the work of a few leaders ; who, mingling with the men as they came upon the ground, and calling to them to fall into this or that party, effected it as rapidly as if it had been determined on by a council of the whole number, and every man had known his place.

It was perfectly notorious to the assemblage that the largest body, which comprehended about two thirds of the whole, was designed for the attack on Newgate. It comprehended all the rioters who had been conspicuous in any of their former proceedings ; all those whom they recommended as daring hands and fit for the work ; all those whose companions had been taken in the riots ; and a great number of people who were relatives or friends of felons in the jail. This last class included, not only the most desperate and utterly abandoned villains in London, but some who were comparatively innocent. There was more than one woman there, disguised in man's attire, and bent upon the rescue of a child or brother. There were the two sons of a man who lay under sentence of death, and who was to be executed along with three others, on the next day but one. There was a

great party of boys whose fellow pickpockets were in the prison; and at the skirts of all, a score of miserable women, outcasts from the world, seeking to release some other fallen creature as miserable as themselves, or moved by a general sympathy perhaps — God knows — with all who were without hope, and wretched.

Old swords, and pistols without ball or powder; sledge hammers, knives, axes, saws, and weapons pillaged from the butchers' shops; a forest of iron bars and wooden clubs; long ladders for scaling the walls, each carried on the shoulders of a dozen men; lighted torches; tow smeared with pitch, and tar, and brimstone; staves roughly plucked from fence and paling; and even crutches taken from crippled beggars in the streets; composed their arms. When all was ready, Hugh and Dennis, with Simon Tappertit between them, led the way. Roaring and chafing like an angry sea, the crowd pressed after them.

Instead of going straight down Holborn to the jail, as all expected, their leaders took the way to Clerkenwell, and pouring down a quiet street, halted before a locksmith's house — the Golden Key.

"Beat at the door," cried Hugh to the men about him. "We want one of his craft to-night. Beat it in, if no one answers."

The shop was shut. Both door and shutters were of a strong and sturdy kind, and they knocked without effect. But the impatient crowd raising a cry of "Set fire to the house!" and torches being passed to the front, an upper window was thrown open, and the stout old locksmith stood before them.

"What now, you villains!" he demanded. "Where is my daughter?"

"Ask no questions of us, old man," retorted Hugh, waving his comrades to be silent, "but come down, and bring the tools of your trade. We want you."

"Want me!" cried the locksmith, glancing at the regimental dress he wore: "Ay, and if some that I could name possessed the hearts of mice, ye should have had me long ago. Mark me, my lad — and you about him do the same. There are a score among ye whom I see now and know, who are dead men from this hour. Begone! and rob an undertaker's while you can! You'll want some coffins before long."

"Will you come down?" cried Hugh.

"Will you give me my daughter, ruffian?" cried the locksmith.

"I know nothing of her," Hugh rejoined. "Burn the door!"

"Stop!" cried the locksmith, in a voice that made them falter — presenting, as he spoke, a gun. "Let an old man do that. You can spare him better."

The young fellow who held the light, and who was stooping down before the door, rose hastily at these words, and fell back. The locksmith ran his eye along the upturned faces, and kept the weapon levelled at the threshold of his house. It had no other rest than his shoulder, but was as steady as the house itself.

"Let the man who does it, take heed to his prayers," he said firmly; "I warn him."

Snatching a torch from one who stood near him, Hugh was stepping forward with an oath, when he was arrested by a shrill and piercing shriek, and, looking upward, saw a fluttering garment on the house-top.

There was another shriek, and another, and then a shrill voice cried, "Is Simmun below!" At the same

moment a lean neck was stretched over the parapet, and Miss Miggs, indistinctly seen in the gathering gloom of evening, screeched in a frenzied manner, "Oh! dear gentlemen, let me hear Simmun's answer from his own lips. Speak to me, Simmun. Speak to me!"

Mr. Tappertit, who was not at all flattered by this compliment, looked up, and bidding her hold her peace, ordered her to come down and open the door, for they wanted her master, and would take no denial.

"Oh good gentlemen!" cried Miss Miggs. "Oh my own precious, precious Simmun" —

"Hold your nonsense, will you!" retorted Mr. Tappertit; "and come down and open the door. — G. Varden, drop that gun, or it will be worse for you."

"Don't mind his gun," screamed Miggs. "Simmun and gentlemen, I poured a mug of table-beer right down the barrel."

The crowd gave a loud shout, which was followed by a roar of laughter.

"It wouldn't go off, not if you was to load it up to the muzzle," screamed Miggs. "Simmun and gentlemen, I'm locked up in the front attic, through the little door on the right hand when you think you've got to the very top of the stairs — and up the flight of corner steps, being careful not to knock your heads against the rafters, and not to tread on one side in case you should fall into the two-pair bedroom through the lath and plaster, which do not bear, but the contrary. Simmun and gentlemen, I've been locked up here for safety, but my endeavors has always been, and always will be, to be on the right side — the blessed side — and to pronounce the Pope of Babylon, and all her inward and her outward workings, which is Pagin. My sentiments is of

little consequences, I know," cried Miggs, with additional shrillness, "for my position is but a servant, and as such, of humilities, still I give expressions to my feelings, and place my reliances on them which entertains my own opinions!"

Without taking much notice of these outpourings of Miss Miggs after she had made her first announcement in relation to the gun, the crowd raised a ladder against the window where the locksmith stood, and notwithstanding that he closed, and fastened, and defended it manfully, soon forced an entrance by shivering the glass and breaking in the frames. After dealing a few stout blows about him, he found himself defenceless, in the midst of a furious crowd, which overflowed the room and softened off in a confused heap of faces at the door and window.

They were very wrathful with him (for he had wounded two men), and even called out to those in front, to bring him forth and hang him on a lamp-post. But Gabriel was quite undaunted, and looked from Hugh and Dennis, who held him by either arm, to Simon Tappertit, who confronted him.

"You have robbed me of my daughter," said the locksmith, "who is far dearer to me than my life; and you may take my life, if you will. I bless God that I have been enabled to keep my wife free of this scene; and that He has made me a man who will not ask mercy at such hands as yours."

"And a very game old gentleman you are," said Mr. Dennis, approvingly; "and you express yourself like a man. What's the odds, brother, whether it's a lamp-post to-night, or a feather-bed ten year to come, eh?"

The locksmith glanced at him disdainfully, but returned no other answer.

"For my part," said the hangman, who particularly favored the lamp-post suggestion, "I honor your principles. They're mine exactly. In such sentiments as them," and here he emphasized his discourse with an oath, "I'm ready to meet you or any man half way. — Have you got a bit of cord anywheres handy? Don't put yourself out of the way, if you haven't. A handkercher will do."

"Don't be a fool, master," whispered Hugh, seizing Varden roughly by the shoulder; "but do as you're bid. You'll soon hear what you're wanted for. Do it!"

"I'll do nothing at your request, or that of any scoundrel here," returned the locksmith. "If you want any service from me, you may spare yourselves the pains of telling me what it is. I tell you, beforehand, I'll do nothing for you."

Mr. Dennis was so affected by this constancy on the part of the stanch old man, that he protested — almost with tears in his eyes — that to balk his inclinations would be an act of cruelty and hard dealing to which he, for one, never could reconcile his conscience. The gentleman, he said, had avowed in so many words that he was ready for working off; such being the case, he considered it their duty, as a civilized and enlightened crowd, to work him off. It was not often, he observed, that they had it in their power to accommodate themselves to the wishes of those from whom they had the misfortune to differ. Having now found an individual who expressed a desire which they could reasonably indulge, (and for himself he was free to confess that in his opinion that desire did honor to his feelings,) he hoped they would decide to accede to his proposition before going any farther. It was an experiment which, skil-

fully and dexterously performed, would be over in five minutes, with great comfort and satisfaction to all parties ; and though it did not become him (Mr. Dennis) to speak well of himself, he trusted he might be allowed to say that he had practical knowledge of the subject, and being naturally of an obliging and friendly disposition, would work the gentleman off with a deal of pleasure.

These remarks, which were addressed in the midst of a frightful din and turmoil to those immediately about him, were received with great favor ; not so much, perhaps, because of the hangman's eloquence, as on account of the locksmith's obstinacy. Gabriel was in imminent peril, and he knew it ; but he preserved a steady silence ; and would have done so, if they had been debating whether they should roast him at a slow fire.

As the hangman spoke, there was some stir and confusion on the ladder ; and directly he was silent — so immediately upon his holding his peace, that the crowd below had no time to learn what he had been saying, or to shout in response — some one at the window cried : —

“ He has a gray head. He is an old man : don't hurt him ! ”

The locksmith turned, with a start, towards the place from which the words had come, and looked hurriedly at the people who were hanging on the ladder and clinging to each other.

“ Pay no respect to my gray hair, young man,” he said, answering the voice and not any one he saw. “ I don't ask it. My heart is green enough to scorn and despise every man among you, band of robbers that you are ! ”

This incautious speech by no means tended to appease the ferocity of the crowd. They cried again to have him brought out ; and it would have gone hard with the

honest locksmith, but that Hugh reminded them in answer, that they wanted his services, and must have them.

"So, tell him what we want," he said to Simon Tappertit, "and quickly. And open your ears, master, if you would ever use them after to-night."

Gabriel folded his arms, which were now at liberty, and eyed his old 'prentice in silence.

"Lookye, Varden," said Sim, "we're bound for Newgate."

"I know you are," returned the locksmith. "You never said a truer word than that."

"To burn it down, I mean," said Simon, "and force the gates, and set the prisoners at liberty. You helped to make the lock of the great door."

"I did," said the locksmith. "You owe me no thanks for that — as you'll find before long."

"Maybe," returned his journeyman, "but you must show us how to force it."

"Must I!"

"Yes; for you know, and I don't. You must come along with us, and pick it with your own hands."

"When I do," said the locksmith quietly, "my hands shall drop off at the wrists, and you shall wear them, Simon Tappertit, on your shoulders for epaulettes."

"We'll see that," cried Hugh, interposing, as the indignation of the crowd again burst forth. "You fill a basket with the tools he'll want, while I bring him downstairs. Open the doors below, some of you. And light the great captain, others! Is there no business afoot, my lads, that you can do nothing but stand and grumble?"

They looked at one another, and quickly dispersing, swarmed over the house, plundering and breaking, ac-

cording to their custom, and carrying off such articles of value as happened to please their fancy. They had no great length of time for these proceedings, for the basket of tools was soon prepared and slung over a man's shoulders. The preparations being now completed, and everything ready for the attack, those who were pillaging and destroying in the other rooms were called down to the workshop. They were about to issue forth, when the man who had been last up-stairs, stepped forward, and asked if the young woman in the garret (who was making a terrible noise, he said, and kept on screaming without the least cessation) was to be released?

For his own part, Simon Tappertit would certainly have replied in the negative, but the mass of his companions, mindful of the good service she had done in the matter of the gun, being of a different opinion, he had nothing for it but to answer, Yes. The man, accordingly, went back again to the rescue, and presently returned with Miss Miggs, limp and doubled up, and very damp from much weeping.

As the young lady had given no tokens of consciousness on their way down-stairs, the bearer reported her either dead or dying; and being at some loss what to do with her, was looking round for a convenient bench or heap of ashes on which to place her senseless form, when she suddenly came upon her feet by some mysterious means, thrust back her hair, stared wildly at Mr. Tappertit, cried "My Simmuns's life is not a victim!" and dropped into his arms with such promptitude that he staggered and reeled some paces back, beneath his lovely burden.

"Oh bother!" said Mr. Tappertit. "Here. Catch hold of her, somebody. Lock her up again; she never ought to have been let out."

"My Simmun!" cried Miss Miggs, in tears, and faintly. "My forever ever blessed Simmun!"

"Hold up, will you," said Mr. Tappertit, in a very unresponsive tone, "I'll let you fall if you don't. What are you sliding your feet off the ground for?"

"My angel Simmuns!" murmured Miggs — "he promised" —

"Promised! Well, and I'll keep my promise," answered Simon, testily. "I mean to provide for you, don't I? Stand up!"

"Where am I to go? What is to become of me after my actions of this night!" cried Miggs. "What resting-places now remains but in the silent tombses!"

"I wish you was in the silent tombses, I do," cried Mr. Tappertit, "and boxed up tight, in a good strong one. Here," he cried to one of the by-standers, in whose ear he whispered for a moment. "Take her off, will you. You understand where?"

The fellow nodded; and taking her in his arms, notwithstanding her broken protestations, and her struggles (which latter species of opposition, involving scratches, was much more difficult of resistance), carried her away. They who were in the house poured out into the street; the locksmith was taken to the head of the crowd, and required to walk between his two conductors; the whole body was put in rapid motion; and without any shouting or noise they bore down straight on Newgate, and halted in a dense mass before the prison-gate.

CHAPTER LXIV.

BREAKING the silence they had hitherto preserved, they raised a great cry as soon as they were ranged before the jail, and demanded to speak with the governor. Their visit was not wholly unexpected, for his house, which fronted the street, was strongly barricaded, the wicket-gate of the prison was closed up, and at no loophole or grating was any person to be seen. Before they had repeated their summons many times, a man appeared upon the roof of the governor's house, and asked what it was they wanted.

Some said one thing, some another, and some only groaned and hissed. It being now nearly dark, and the house high, many persons in the throng were not aware that any one had come to answer them, and continued their clamor until the intelligence was gradually diffused through the whole concourse. Ten minutes or more elapsed before any one voice could be heard with tolerable distinctness; during which interval the figure remained perched alone, against the summer-evening sky, looking down into the troubled street.

"Are you," said Hugh at length, "Mr. Akerman, the head jailer here?"

"Of course he is, brother," whispered Dennis. But Hugh, without minding him, took his answer from the man himself.

"Yes," he said. "I am."

"You have got some friends of ours in your custody, master."

"I have a good many people in my custody." He glanced downward, as he spoke, into the jail: and the feeling that he could see into the different yards, and that he overlooked everything which was hidden from their view by the rugged walls, so lashed and goaded the mob, that they howled like wolves.

"Deliver up our friends," said Hugh, "and you may keep the rest."

"It's my duty to keep them all. I shall do my duty."

"If you don't throw the doors open, we shall break 'em down," said Hugh; "for we will have the rioters out."

"All I can do, good people," Akerman replied, "is to exhort you to disperse; and to remind you that the consequences of any disturbance in this place, will be very severe, and bitterly repented by most of you, when it is too late."

He made as though he would retire when he had said these words, but he was checked by the voice of the locksmith.

"Mr. Akerman," cried Gabriel, "Mr. Akerman."

"I will hear no more from any of you," replied the governor, turning towards the speaker, and waving his hand.

"But I am not one of them," said Gabriel. "I am an honest man, Mr. Akerman; a respectable tradesman — Gabriel Varden, the locksmith. You know me?"

"You among the crowd!" cried the governor in an altered voice.

"Brought here by force — brought here to pick the

lock of the great door for them," rejoined the locksmith. "Bear witness for me, Mr. Akerman, that I refuse to do it; and that I will not do it, come what may of my refusal. If any violence is done to me, please to remember this."

"Is there no way of helping you?" said the governor

"None, Mr. Akerman. You'll do your duty, and I'll do mine. Once again, you robbers and cut-throats," said the locksmith, turning round upon them, "I refuse. Ah! Howl till you're hoarse. I refuse."

"Stay — stay!" said the jailer, hastily. "Mr. Varden, I know you for a worthy man, and one who would do no unlawful act except upon compulsion" —

"Upon compulsion, sir," interposed the locksmith, who felt that the tone in which this was said, conveyed the speaker's impression that he had ample excuse for yielding to the furious multitude who beset and hemmed him in, on every side, and among whom he stood, an old man, quite alone; "upon compulsion, sir, I'll do nothing."

"Where is that man," said the keeper, anxiously, "who spoke to me just now?"

"Here!" Hugh replied.

"Do you know what the guilt of murder is, and that by keeping that honest tradesman at your side you endanger his life!"

"We know it very well," he answered, "for what else did we bring him here? Let's have our friends, master, and you shall have your friend. Is that fair, lads?"

The mob replied to him with a loud Hurrah!

"You see how it is, sir?" cried Varden. "Keep 'em out, in King George's name. Remember what I have said. Good-night!"

There was no more parley. A shower of stones and

other missiles compelled the keeper of the jail to retire and the mob, pressing on, and swarming round the walls, forced Gabriel Varden close up to the door.

In vain the basket of tools was laid upon the ground before him, and he was urged in turn by promises, by blows, by offers of reward, and threats of instant death, to do the office for which they had brought him there. "No," cried the sturdy locksmith, "I will not!"

He had never loved his life so well as then, but nothing could move him. The savage faces that glared upon him, look where he would; the cries of those who thirsted, like wild animals, for his blood; the sight of men pressing forward, and trampling down their fellows, as they strove to reach him, and struck at him above the heads of other men, with axes and with iron bars; all failed to daunt him. He looked from man to man, and face to face, and still, with quickened breath and lessening color, cried firmly, "I will not!"

Dennis dealt him a blow upon the face which felled him to the ground. He sprung up again like a man in the prime of life, and with blood upon his forehead, caught him by the throat.

"You cowardly dog!" he said. "Give me my daughter. Give me my daughter."

They struggled together. Some cried "Kill him," and some (but they were not near enough) strove to trample him to death. Tug as he would at the old man's wrists, the hangman could not force him to unclinch his hands.

"Is this all the return you make me, you ungrateful monster?" he articulated with great difficulty, and with many oaths.

"Give me my daughter!" cried the locksmith, who

was now as fierce as those who gathered round him :
" Give me my daughter ! "

He was down again, and up, and down once more, and buffeting with a score of them, who bandied him from hand to hand, when one tall fellow, fresh from a slaughter-house, whose dress and great thigh boots smoked hot with grease and blood, raised a pole-axe, and swearing a horrible oath, aimed it at the old man's uncovered head. At that instant, and in the very act, he fell himself, as if struck by lightning, and over his body a one-armed man came darting to the locksmith's side. Another man was with him, and both caught the locksmith roughly in their grasp.

" Leave him to us ! " they cried to Hugh — struggling, as they spoke, to force a passage backward through the crowd. " Leave him to us. Why do you waste your whole strength on such as he, when a couple of men can finish him in as many minutes ! You lose time. Remember the prisoners ! remember Barnaby ! "

The cry ran through the mob. Hammers began to rattle on the walls ; and every man strove to reach the prison, and be among the foremost rank. Fighting their way through the press and struggle, as desperately as if they were in the midst of enemies rather than their own friends, the two men retreated with the locksmith between them, and dragged him through the very heart of the concourse.

And now the strokes began to fall like hail upon the gate, and on the strong building ; for those who could not reach the door, spent their fierce rage on anything — even on the great blocks of stone, which shivered their weapons into fragments, and made their hands and arms to tingle as if the walls were active in their stout resist-

ance, and dealt them back their blows. The clash of iron ringing upon iron, mingled with the deafening tumult and sounded high above it, as the great sledge-hammers rattled on the nailed and plated door: the sparks flew off in showers; men worked in gangs, and at short intervals relieved each other, that all their strength might be devoted to the work; but there stood the portal still, as grim and dark and strong as ever, and, saving for the dints upon its battered surface, quite unchanged.

While some brought all their energies to bear upon this toilsome task; and some, rearing ladders against the prison, tried to clamber to the summit of the walls they were too short to scale; and some again engaged a body of police a hundred strong, and beat them back and trod them under foot by force of numbers; others besieged the house on which the jailer had appeared, and, driving in the door, brought out his furniture, and piled it up against the prison gate, to make a bonfire which should burn it down. As soon as this device was understood, all those who had labored hitherto, cast down their tools and helped to swell the heap; which reached half-way across the street, and was so high, that those who threw more fuel on the top, got up by ladders. When all the keeper's goods were flung upon this costly pile, to the last fragment, they smeared it with the pitch, and tar, and rosin they had brought, and sprinkled it with turpentine. To all the woodwork round the prison-doors they did the like, leaving not a joist or beam untouched. This infernal christening performed, they fired the pile with lighted matches and with blazing tow, and then stood by, awaiting the result.

The furniture being very dry, and rendered more com-

bustible by wax and oil, besides the arts they had used, took fire at once. The flames roared high and fiercely, blackening the prison wall, and twining up its lofty front like burning serpents. At first, they crowded round the blaze, and vented their exultation only in their looks; but when it grew hotter and fiercer — when it crackled, leaped, and roared, like a great furnace — when it shone upon the opposite houses, and lighted up not only the pale and wondering faces at the windows, but the inmost corners of each habitation — when, through the deep red heat and glow, the fire was seen sporting and toying with the door, now clinging to its obdurate surface, now gliding off with fierce inconstancy and soaring high into the sky, anon returning to fold it in its burning grasp and lure it to its ruin — when it shone and gleamed so brightly that the church clock of St. Sepulchre's, so often pointing to the hour of death, was legible as in broad day, and the vane upon its steeple-top glittered in the unwonted light like something richly jewelled — when blackened stone and sombre brick grew ruddy in the deep reflection, and windows shone like burnished gold, dotting the longest distance in the fiery vista with their specks of brightness — when wall and tower, and roof and chimney-stack, seemed drunk, and in the flickering glare appeared to reel and stagger — when scores of objects, never seen before, burst out upon the view, and things the most familiar put on some new aspect — then the mob began to join the whirl, and with loud yells, and shouts, and clamor, such as happily is seldom heard, bestirred themselves to feed the fire, and keep it at its height.

Although the heat was so intense that the paint on the houses over against the prison, parched and crackled

up, and swelling into boils, as it were, from excess of torture, broke and crumbled away; although the glass fell from the window-sashes, and the lead and iron on the roofs blistered the incautious hand that touched them, and the sparrows in the eaves took wing, and rendered giddy by the smoke, fell fluttering down upon the blazing pile; still the fire was tended unceasingly by busy hands, and round it, men were going always. They never slackened in their zeal, or kept aloof, but pressed upon the flames so hard, that those in front had much ado to save themselves from being thrust in; if one man swooned or dropped, a dozen struggled for his place, and that, although they knew the pain, and thirst, and pressure to be unendurable. Those who fell down in fainting-fits, and were not crushed or burnt, were carried to an inn-yard close at hand, and dashed with water from a pump; of which buckets full were passed from man to man among the crowd; but such was the strong desire of all to drink, and such the fighting to be first, that, for the most part, the whole contents were spilled upon the ground, without the lips of one man being moistened.

Meanwhile, and in the midst of all the roar and outcry, those who were nearest to the pile, heaped up again the burning fragments that came toppling down, and raked the fire about the door, which, although a sheet of flame, was still a door fast locked and barred, and kept them out. Great pieces of blazing wood were passed, besides, above the people's heads to such as stood about the ladders, and some of these, climbing up to the topmost stave, and holding on with one hand by the prison wall, exerted all their skill and force to cast these fire-brands on the roof, or down into the yards within. In

many instances their efforts were successful ; which occasioned a new and appalling addition to the horrors of the scene ; for the prisoners within, seeing from between their bars that the fire caught in many places and thrived fiercely, and being all locked up in strong cells for the night, began to know that they were in danger of being burnt alive. This terrible fear, spreading from cell to cell, and from yard to yard, vented itself in such dismal cries and wailings, and in such dreadful shrieks for help, that the whole jail resounded with the noise ; which was loudly heard even above the shouting of the mob and roaring of the flames, and was so full of agony and despair, that it made the boldest tremble.

It was remarkable that these cries began in that quarter of the jail which fronted Newgate Street, where it was well known, the men who were to suffer death on Thursday were confined. And not only were these four who had so short a time to live, the first to whom the dread of being burnt occurred, but they were, throughout, the most importunate of all : for they could be plainly heard, notwithstanding the great thickness of the walls, crying that the wind set that way, and that the flames would shortly reach them ; and calling to the officers of the jail to come and quench the fire from a cistern which was in their yard, and full of water. Judging from what the crowd without the walls could hear from time to time, these four doomed wretches never ceased to call for help ; and that with as much distraction, and in as great a frenzy of attachment to existence, as though each had an honored, happy life before him, instead of eight-and-forty hours of miserable imprisonment, and then a violent and shameful death.

But the anguish and suffering of the two sons of one

of these men, when they heard, or fancied that they heard, their father's voice, is past description. After wringing their hands and rushing to and fro as if they were stark mad, one mounted on the shoulders of his brother, and tried to clamber up the face of the high wall, guarded at the top with spikes and points of iron. And when he fell among the crowd, he was not deterred by his bruises, but mounted up again, and fell again, and, when he found the feat impossible, began to beat the stones and tear them with his hands, as if he could that way make a breach in the strong building, and force a passage in. At last, they cleft their way among the mob about the door, though many men, a dozen times their match, had tried in vain to do so, and were seen, in — yes, in — the fire, striving to prize it down, with crow-bars.

Nor were they alone affected by the outcry from within the prison. The women who were looking on, shrieked loudly, beat their hands together, stopped their ears; and many fainted: the men who were not near the walls and active in the siege, rather than do nothing, tore up the pavement of the street, and did so with a haste and fury they could not have surpassed if that had been the jail, and they were near their object. Not one living creature in the throng was for an instant still. The whole great mass were mad.

A shout! Another! Another yet, though few knew why, or what it meant. But those around the gate had seen it slowly yield, and drop from its topmost hinge. It hung on that side by but one, but it was upright still, because of the bar, and its having sunk, of its own weight, into the heap of ashes at its foot. There was now a gap at the top of the door-way, through which

could be descried a gloomy passage, cavernous and dark. Pile up the fire!

It burnt fiercely. The door was red-hot, and the gap wider. They vainly tried to shield their faces with their hands, and standing as if in readiness for a spring, watched the place. Dark figures, some crawling on their hands and knees, some carried in the arms of others, were seen to pass along the roof. It was plain the jail could hold out no longer. The keeper, and his officers, and their wives and children, were escaping. Pile up the fire!

The door sank down again: it settled deeper in the cinders — tottered — yielded — was down!

As they shouted again, they fell back, for a moment, and left a clear space about the fire that lay between them and the jail entry. Hugh leaped upon the blazing heap, and scattering a train of sparks into the air, and making the dark lobby glitter with those that hung upon his dress, dashed into the jail.

The hangman followed. And then so many rushed upon their track, that the fire got trodden down and thinly strewn about the street; but there was no need of it now, for, inside and out, the prison was in flames.

CHAPTER LXV.

DURING the whole course of the terrible scene which was now at its height, one man in the jail suffered degree of fear and mental torment which had no parallel in the endurance even of those who lay under sentence of death.

When the rioters first assembled before the building, the murderer was roused from sleep — if such slumbers as his may have that blessed name — by the roar of voices, and the struggling of a great crowd. He started up as these sounds met his ear, and sitting on his bedstead, listened.

After a short interval of silence the noise burst out again. Still listening attentively, he made out, in course of time, that the jail was besieged by a furious multitude. His guilty conscience instantly arrayed these men against himself, and brought the fear upon him that he would be singled out, and torn to pieces.

Once impressed with the terror of this conceit, everything tended to confirm and strengthen it. His double crime, the circumstances under which it had been committed, the length of time that had elapsed, and its discovery in spite of all, made him as if it were, the visible object of the Almighty's wrath. In all the crime and vice and moral gloom of the great pest-house of the capital, he stood alone, marked and singled out by his great guilt, a Lucifer among the devils. The other

prisoners were a host, hiding and sheltering each other—a crowd like that without the walls. He was one man against the whole united concourse; a single, solitary lonely man, from whom the very captives in the jail fell off and shrunk appalled.

It might be that the intelligence of his capture having been bruited abroad, they had come there purposely to drag him out and kill him in the street; or it might be that they were the rioters, and, in pursuance of an old design, had come to sack the prison. But in either case he had no belief or hope that they would spare him. Every shout they raised, and every sound they made, was a blow upon his heart. As the attack went on, he grew more wild and frantic in his terror: tried to pull away the bars that guarded the chimney and prevented him from climbing up: called loudly on the turnkeys to cluster round the cell and save him from the fury of the rabble; or put him in some dungeon underground, no matter of what depth, how dark it was, or loathsome, or beset with rats and creeping things, so that it hid him and was hard to find.

But no one came, or answered him. Fearful, even while he cried to them, of attracting attention, he was silent. By and by, he saw, as he looked from his grated window, a strange glimmering on the stone walls and pavement of the yard. It was feeble at first, and came and went, as though some officers with torches were passing to and fro upon the roof of the prison. Soon it reddened, and lighted brands came whirling down, spattering the ground with fire, and burning sullenly in corners. One rolled beneath a wooden bench, and set it in a blaze; another caught a water-spout, and

so went climbing up the wall, leaving a long straight track of fire behind it. After a time, a slow thick shower of burning fragments, from some upper portion of the prison which was blazing nigh, began to fall before his door. Remembering that it opened outwards, he knew that every spark which fell upon the heap and in the act lost its bright life, and died an ugly speck of dust and rubbish, helped to entomb him in a living grave. Still, though the jail resounded with shrieks and cries for help, — though the fire bounded up as if each separate flame had had a tiger's life, and roared as though, in every one, there were a hungry voice — though the heat began to grow intense, and the air suffocating, and the clamor without increased, and the danger of his situation even from one merciless element was every moment more extreme, — still he was afraid to raise his voice again, lest the crowd should break in, and should, of their own ears or from the information given them by the other prisoners, get the clew to his place of confinement. Thus fearful alike, of those within the prison and of those without; of noise and silence; light and darkness; of being released, and being left there to die; he was so tortured and tormented, that nothing man has ever done to man in the horrible caprice of power and cruelty, exceeds his self-inflicted punishment.

Now, now, the door was down. Now they came rushing through the jail, calling to each other in the vaulted passages; clashing the iron gates dividing yard from yard; beating at the doors of cells and wards; wrenching off bolts and locks and bars; tearing down the door-posts to get men out; endeavoring to drag them by main force through gaps and windows where a child

could scarcely pass; whooping and yelling without a moment's rest; and running through the heat and flames as if they were cased in metal. By their legs, their arms, the hair upon their heads, they dragged the prisoners out. Some threw themselves upon the captives as they got towards the door, and tried to file away their irons; some danced about them with a frenzied joy and rent their clothes, and were ready, as it seemed, to tear them limb from limb. Now a party of a dozen men came darting through the yard into which the murderer cast fearful glances from his darkened window; dragging a prisoner along the ground whose dress they had nearly torn from his body in their mad eagerness to set him free, and who was bleeding and senseless in their hands. Now a score of prisoners ran to and fro, who had lost themselves in the intricacies of the prison, and were so bewildered with the noise and glare that they knew not where to turn or what to do, and still cried out for help, as loudly as before. Anon some famished wretch whose theft had been a loaf of bread, or scrap of butcher's meat, came skulking past, barefooted — going slowly away because that jail, his house, was burning; not because he had any other, or had friends to meet, or old haunts to revisit, or any liberty to gain, but liberty to starve and die. And then a knot of highwaymen went trooping by, conducted by the friends they had among the crowd, who muffled their fetters as they went along, with handkerchiefs and bands of hay, and wrapped them in coats and cloaks, and gave them drink from bottles, and held it to their lips, because of their handcuffs which there was no time to remove. All this, and Heaven knows how much more, was done amidst a noise, a hurry, and distraction, like

nothing that we know of, even in our dreams ; which seemed forever on the rise, and never to decrease for the space of a single instant.

He was still looking down from his window upon these things, when a band of men with torches, ladders, axes, and many kinds of weapons, poured into the yard, and hammering at his door, inquired if there were any prisoner within. He left the window when he saw them coming, and drew back into the remotest corner of the cell ; but although he returned them no answer, they had a fancy that some one was inside, for they presently set ladders against it, and began to tear away the bars at the casement ; not only that, indeed, but with pickaxes to hew down the very stones in the wall.

As soon as they had made a breach at the window, large enough for the admission of a man's head, one of them thrust in a torch and looked all round the room. He followed this man's gaze until it rested on himself, and heard him demand why he had not answered, but made him no reply.

In the general surprise and wonder, they were used to this ; without saying anything more, they enlarged the breach until it was large enough to admit the body of a man, and then came dropping down upon the floor, one after another, until the cell was full. They caught him up among them, handed him to the window, and those who stood upon the ladders passed him down upon the pavement of the yard. Then the rest came out, one after another, and, bidding him fly, and lose no time, or the way would be choked up, hurried away to rescue others.

It seemed not a minute's work from first to last. He

staggered to his feet incredulous of what had happened, when the yard was filled again, and a crowd rushed on, hurrying Barnaby among them. In another minute — not so much: another minute! the same instant, with no lapse or interval between! — he and his son were being passed from hand to hand, through the dense crowd in the street, and were glancing backward at a burning pile which some one said was Newgate.

From the moment of their first entrance into the prison, the crowd dispersed themselves about it, and swarmed into every chink and crevice, as if they had a perfect acquaintance with its innermost parts, and bore in their minds an exact plan of the whole. For this immediate knowledge of the place, they were, no doubt, in a great degree indebted to the hangman, who stood in the lobby, directing some to go this way, some that, and some the other; and who materially assisted in bringing about the wonderful rapidity with which the release of the prisoners was effected.

But this functionary of the law reserved one important piece of intelligence, and kept it snugly to himself. When he had issued his instructions relative to every other part of the building, and the mob were dispersed from end to end, and busy at their work, he took a bundle of keys from a kind of cupboard in the wall, and going by a private passage near the chapel (it joined the governor's house, and was then on fire), betook himself to the condemned cells, which were a series of small, strong, dismal rooms, opening on a low gallery, guarded, at the end at which he entered, by a strong iron wicket, and at its opposite extremity by two doors and a thick grate. Having double-locked the wicket, and assured himself that the other entrances were well secured, he

sat down on a bench in the gallery, and sucked the head of his stick, with an air of the utmost complacency, tranquillity, and contentment.

It would have been strange enough, a man's enjoying himself in this quiet manner, while the prison was burning, and such a tumult was cleaving the air, though he had been outside the walls. But here, in the very heart of the building, and moreover with the prayers and cries of the four men under sentence sounding in his ears, and their hands, stretched out through the gratings in their cell doors, clasped in frantic entreaty before his very eyes, it was particularly remarkable. Indeed, Mr. Dennis appeared to think it an uncommon circumstance, and to banter himself upon it; for he thrust his hat on one side as some men do when they are in a waggish humor, sucked the head of his stick with a higher relish, and smiled as though he would say, "Dennis, you're a rum dog; you're a queer fellow; you're capital company, Dennis, and quite a character!"

He sat in this way for some minutes, while the four men in the cells, certain that somebody had entered the gallery, but could not see who, gave vent to such piteous entreaties as wretches in their miserable condition may be supposed to have been inspired with: urging, whoever it was, to set them at liberty, for the love of Heaven; and protesting, with great fervor, and truly enough, perhaps, for the time, that if they escaped, they would amend their ways, and would never, never, never again do wrong before God or man, but would lead penitent and sober lives, and sorrowfully repent the crimes they had committed. The terrible energy with which they spoke, would have moved any person, no matter how good or just (if any good or just person could have

strayed into that sad place that night), to have set them at liberty ; and, while he would have left any other punishment to its free course, to have saved them from this last dreadful and repulsive penalty ; which never turned a man inclined to evil, and has hardened thousands who were half inclined to good.

Mr. Dennis, who had been bred and nurtured in the good old school, and had administered the good old laws on the good old plan, always once and sometimes twice every six weeks, for a long time, bore these appeals with a deal of philosophy. Being at last, however, rather disturbed in his pleasant reflection by their repetition, he rapped at one of the doors with his stick, and cried : —

“ Hold your noise there, will you ? ”

At this they all cried together that they were to be hanged on the next day but one ; and again implored his aid.

“ Aid ! For what ! ” said Mr. Dennis, playfully rapping the knuckles of the hand nearest him.

“ To save us ! ” they cried.

“ Oh, certainly,” said Mr. Dennis, winking at the wall in the absence of any friend with whom he could humor the joke. “ And so you’re to be worked off, are you brothers ? ”

“ Unless we are released to-night,” one of them cried, “ we are dead men ! ”

“ I tell you what it is,” said the hangman, gravely ; “ I’m afraid my friend that you’re not in that ’ere state of mind that’s suitable to your condition, then ; you’re not a-going to be released : don’t think it — Will you leave off that ’ere indecent row ? I wonder you a’n’t ashamed of yourselves, I do.”

He followed up this reproof by rapping every set of knuckles one after the other, and having done so, resumed his seat again with a cheerful countenance.

"You've had law," he said, crossing his legs and elevating his eyebrows: "laws have been made a' purpose for you; a wery handsome prison's been made a' purpose for you; a parson's kept a' purpose for you; a constitootional officer's appointed a' purpose for you; carts is maintained a' purpose for you — and yet you're not contented! — *Will* you hold that noise, you sir in the farthest?"

A groan was the only answer.

"So well as I can make out," said Mr. Dennis, in a tone of mingled badinage and remonstrance, "there's not a man among you. I begin to think I'm on the opposite side, and among the ladies; though for the matter of that, I've seen a many ladies face it out, in a manner that did honor to the sex. — You in number two, don't grind them teeth of yours. Worse manners," said the hangman, rapping at the door with his stick, "I never see in this place afore. I'm ashamed on you. You're a disgrace to the Bailey."

After pausing for a moment to hear if anything could be pleaded in justification, Mr. Dennis resumed in a sort of coaxing tone: —

"Now look'ee here, you four. I'm come here to take care of you, and see that you a'n't burnt, instead of the other thing. It's no use your making any noise, for you won't be found out by them as has broken in, and you'll only be hoarse when you come to the speeches, — which is a pity. What I say in respect to the speeches always is, 'Give it mouth.' That's my maxim. Give it mouth. I've heerd," said the hangman, pulling off his hat to take

his handkerchief from the crown and wipe his face, and then putting it on again a little more on one side than before, "I've heerd a eloquence on them boards — you know what boards I mean — and have heerd a degree of mouth given to them speeches, that they was as clear as a bell, and as good as a play. There's a pattern! And always, when a thing of this natur's to come off, what I stand up for, is, a proper frame of mind. Let's have a proper frame of mind, and we can go through with it, creditable — pleasant — sociable. Whatever you do, (and I address myself, in particular, to you in the farthest), never snivel. I'd sooner by half, though I lose by it, see a man tear his clothes a' purpose to spile 'em before they come to me, than find him snivelling. It's ten to one a better frame of mind, every way!"

While the hangman addressed them to this effect, in the tone and with the air of a pastor in familiar conversation with his flock, the noise had been in some degree subdued; for the rioters were busy in conveying the prisoners to the Sessions House, which was beyond the main walls of the prison, though connected with it, and the crowd were busy too, in passing them from thence along the street. But when he had got thus far in his discourse, the sound of voices in the yard showed plainly that the mob had returned and were coming that way; and directly afterwards a violent crashing at the grate below, gave note of their attack upon the cells (as they were called) at last.

It was in vain the hangman ran from door to door, and covered the grates, one after another, with his hat, in futile efforts to stifle the cries of the four men within; it was in vain he dogged their outstretched hands, and

beat them with his stick, or menaced them with new and lingering pains in the execution of his office; the place resounded with their cries. These, together with the feeling that they were now the last men in the jail, so worked upon and stimulated the besiegers, that in an incredibly short space of time they forced the strong grate down below, which was formed of iron rods two inches square, drove in the two other doors, as if they had been but deal partitions, and stood at the end of the gallery with only a bar or two between them and the cells.

"Holloa!" cried Hugh, who was the first to look into the dusky passage: "Dennis before us! Well done, old boy. Be quick, and open here, for we shall be suffocated in the smoke, going out."

"Go out at once, then," said Dennis. "What do you want here?"

"Want!" echoed Hugh. "The four men."

"Four devils!" cried the hangman. "Don't you know they're left for death on Thursday? Don't you respect the law — the constitution — nothing? Let the four men be."

"Is this a time for joking?" cried Hugh. "Do you hear 'em? Pull away these bars that have got fixed between the door and the ground; and let us in."

"Brother," said the hangman, in a low voice, as he stooped under pretence of doing what Hugh desired, but only looked up in his face, "can't you leave these here four men to me, if I've the whim! You do what you like, and have what you like of everything for your share, — give me my share. I want these four men left alone, I tell you!"

"Pull the bars down, or stand out of the way," was Hugh's reply.

"You can turn the crowd if you like, you know that well enough, brother," said the hangman, slowly. "What! You *will* come in, will you?"

"Yes."

"You won't let these men alone, and leave 'em to me? You've no respect for nothing — haven't you?" said the hangman, retreating to the door by which he had entered, and regarding his companion with a scowl. "You *will* come in, will you, brother!"

"I tell you yes. What the devil ails you? Where are you going?"

"No matter where I'm going," rejoined the hangman, looking in again at the iron wicket, which he had nearly shut upon himself, and held ajar. "Remember where you're coming. That's all!"

With that, he shook his likeness at Hugh, and giving him a grin, compared with which his usual smile was amiable, disappeared and shut the door.

Hugh paused no longer, but goaded alike by the cries of the convicts, and by the impatience of the crowd, warned the man immediately behind him — the way was only wide enough for one abreast — to stand back, and wielded a sledge-hammer with such strength, that after a few blows the iron bent and broke, and gave them free admittance.

If the two sons of one of these men, of whom mention has been made, were furious in their zeal before, they had now the wrath and vigor of lions. Calling to the man within each cell, to keep as far back as he could, lest the axes crashing through the door should wound him, a party went to work upon each one, to beat it in by sheer strength, and force the bolts and staples from their hold. But although these two lads

had the weakest party, and the worse armed, and did not begin until after the others, having stopped to whisper to him through the grate, that door was the first open, and that man the first out. As they dragged him into the gallery to knock off his irons, he fell down among them, a mere heap of chains, and was carried out in that state on men's shoulders with no sign of life.

The release of these four wretched creatures, and conveying them, astounded and bewildered, into the street so full of life — a spectacle they had never thought to see again, until they emerged from solitude and silence upon that last journey, when the air should be heavy with the pent-up breath of thousands, and the streets and houses should be built and roofed with human faces, not with bricks and tiles and stones — was the crowning horror of the scene. Their pale and haggard looks, and hollow eyes; their staggering feet, and hands stretched out as if to save themselves from falling; their wandering and uncertain air; the way they heaved and gasped for breath, as though in water, when they were first plunged into the crowd; all marked them for the men. No need to say "this one was doomed to die;" there were the words broadly stamped and branded on his face. The crowd fell off, as if they had been laid out for burial, and had risen in their shrouds; and many were seen to shudder, as though they had been actually dead men, when they chanced to touch or brush against their garments.

At the bidding of the mob, the houses were all illuminated that night — lighted up from top to bottom as at a time of public gayety and joy. Many years afterwards, old people who lived in their youth near this part of the

city, remembered being in a great glare of light, within doors and without, and as they looked, timid and frightened children, from the windows, seeing *a face* go by. Though the whole great crowd and all its other terrors had faded from their recollection, this one object remained ; alone, distinct, and well-remembered. Even in the unpractised minds of infants, one of these doomed men, darting past, and but an instant seen, was an image of force enough to dim the whole concourse ; to find itself an all-absorbing place, and hold it ever after.

When this last task had been achieved, the shouts and cries grew fainter ; the clank of fetters, which had resounded on all sides as the prisoners escaped, was heard no more ; all the noises of the crowd subsided into a hoarse and sullen murmur as it passed into the distance ; and when the human tide had rolled away, a melancholy heap of smoking ruins marked the spot where it had lately chafed and roared.

CHAPTER LXVI.

ALTHOUGH he had had no rest upon the previous night, and had watched with little intermission for some weeks past, sleeping only in the day by starts and snatches, Mr. Haredale, from the dawn of morning until sunset, sought his niece in every place where he deemed it possible she could have taken refuge. All day long, nothing, save a draught of water, passed his lips; though he prosecuted his inquiries far and wide, and never so much as sat down, once.

In every quarter he could think of; at Chigwell and in London; at the houses of the tradespeople with whom he dealt, and of the friends he knew; he pursued his search. A prey to the most harrowing anxieties and apprehensions, he went from magistrate to magistrate, and finally to the Secretary of State. The only comfort he received was from this minister, who assured him that the Government, being now driven to the exercise of the extreme prerogatives of the Crown, were determined to exert them; that a proclamation would probably be out upon the morrow, giving to the military, discretionary and unlimited power in the suppression of the riots; that the sympathies of the King, the Administration, and both Houses of Parliament, and indeed of all good men of every religious persuasion, were strongly with the injured Catholics; and that justice should be done them at any cost or hazard. He told him, moreover, that

other persons whose houses had been burnt, had for a time lost sight of their children or their relatives, but had in every case, within his knowledge, succeeded in discovering them; that his complaint should be remembered, and fully stated in the instructions given to the officers in command, and to all the inferior myrmidons of justice; and that everything that could be done to help him, should be done with a good-will and in good faith.

Grateful for this consolation, feeble as it was in its reference to the past, and little hope as it afforded him in connection with the subject of distress which lay nearest to his heart; and really thankful for the interest the minister expressed, and seemed to feel, in his condition; Mr. Haredale withdrew. He found himself with the night coming on, alone in the streets; and destitute of any place in which to lay his head.

He entered an hotel near Charing Cross, and ordered some refreshment and a bed. He saw that his faint and worn appearance attracted the attention of the landlord and his waiters; and thinking that they might suppose him to be penniless, took out his purse, and laid it on the table. It was not that, the landlord said, in a faltering voice. If he were one of those who had suffered by the rioters, he durst not give him entertainment. He had a family of children, and had been twice warned to be careful in receiving guests. He heartily prayed his forgiveness, but what could he do?

Nothing. No man felt that more sincerely than Mr. Haredale. He told the man as much, and left the house.

Feeling that he might have anticipated this occurrence, after what he had seen at Chigwell in the morn-

ing, where no man dared to touch a spade, though he offered a large reward to all who would come and dig among the ruins of his house, he walked along the Strand; too proud to expose himself to another refusal, and of too generous a spirit to involve in distress or ruin any honest tradesman who might be weak enough to give him shelter. He wandered into one of the streets by the side of the river, and was pacing in a thoughtful manner up and down, thinking of things that had happened long ago, when he heard a servant-man at an upper window call to another on the opposite side of the street, that the mob were setting fire to Newgate.

To Newgate! where that man was! His failing strength returned, his energies came back with tenfold vigor, on the instant. If it were possible — if they should set the murderer free — was he, after all he had undergone, to die with the suspicion of having slain his own brother, dimly gathering about him —

He had no consciousness of going to the jail; but there he stood, before it. There was the crowd, wedged and pressed together in a dense, dark, moving mass; and there were the flames soaring up into the air. His head turned round and round, lights flashed before his eyes, and he struggled hard with two men.

“Nay, nay,” said one. “Be more yourself, my good sir. We attract attention here. Come away. What can you do among so many men?”

“The gentleman’s always for doing something,” said the other, forcing him along as he spoke. “I like him for that. I do like him for that.”

They had by this time got him into a court, hard by the prison. He looked from one to the other, and as he

tried to release himself, felt that he tottered on his feet. He who had spoken first, was the old gentleman whom he had seen at the Lord Mayor's. The other was John Grueby, who had stood by him so manfully at Westminster.

"What does this mean?" he asked them faintly
"How came we together?"

"On the skirts of the crowd," returned the distiller;
"but come with us. Pray come with us. You seem to know my friend here?"

"Surely," said Mr. Haredale, looking in a kind of stupor at John.

"He'll tell you then," returned the old gentleman,
"that I am a man to be trusted. He's my servant. He was lately (as you know, I have no doubt) in Lord George Gordon's service; but he left it, and brought, in pure good-will to me and others, who are marked by the rioters, such intelligence as he had picked up of their designs."

— "On one condition, please, sir," said John, touching his hat. "No evidence against my lord — a misled man — a kind-hearted man, sir. My lord never intended this."

"The condition will be observed, of course," rejoined the old distiller. "It's a point of honor. But come with us, sir; pray come with us."

John Grueby added no entreaties, but he adopted a different kind of persuasion, by putting his arm through one of Mr. Haredale's, while his master took the other, and leading him away with all speed.

Sensible, from a strange lightness in his head, and a difficulty in fixing his thoughts on anything, even to the extent of bearing his companions in his mind for a

minute together without looking at them, that his brain was affected by the agitation and suffering through which he had passed, and to which he was still a prey, Mr. Haredale let them lead him where they would. As they went along, he was conscious of having no command over what he said or thought, and that he had a fear of going mad.

The distiller lived, as he had told him when they first met, on Holborn Hill, where he had great storehouses, and drove a large trade. They approached his house by a back entrance, lest they should attract the notice of the crowd, and went into an upper room which faced towards the street; the windows, however, in common with those of every other room in the house, were boarded up inside, in order, that, out of doors, all might appear quite dark.

They laid him on a sofa in this chamber, perfectly insensible; but John immediately fetching a surgeon, who took from him a large quantity of blood, he gradually came to himself. As he was, for the time, too weak to walk, they had no difficulty in persuading him to remain there all night, and got him to bed without loss of a minute. That done, they gave him cordial and some toast, and presently a pretty strong composing-draught, under the influence of which he soon fell into a lethargy, and, for a time, forgot his troubles.

The vintner, who was a very hearty old fellow and a worthy man, had no thoughts of going to bed himself, for he had received several threatening warnings from the rioters, and had indeed gone out that evening to try and gather from the conversation of the mob whether his house was to be the next attacked. He sat all night in an easy-chair in the same room — dozing a little now

and then — and received from time to time the reports of John Grueby and two or three other trustworthy persons in his employ, who went out into the streets as scouts ; and for whose entertainment an ample allowance of good cheer (which the old vintner, despite his anxiety, now and then attacked himself) was set forth in an adjoining chamber.

These accounts were of a sufficiently alarming nature from the first ; but as the night wore on, they grew so much worse, and involved such a fearful amount of riot and destruction, that in comparison with these new tidings all the previous disturbances sunk to nothing.

The first intelligence that came, was of the taking of Newgate, and the escape of all the prisoners, whose track, as they made up Holborn and into the adjacent streets, was proclaimed to those citizens who were shut up in their houses, by the rattling of their chains, which formed a dismal concert, and was heard in every direction, as though so many forges were at work. The flames too, shone so brightly through the vintner's skylights, that the rooms and staircases below were nearly as light as in broad day ; while the distant shorting of the mob seemed to shake the very walls and ceilings.

At length they were heard approaching the house, and some minutes of terrible anxiety ensued. They came close up, and stopped before it ; but after giving three loud yells, went on. And although they returned several times that night, creating new alarms each time, they did nothing there ; having their hands full. Shortly after they had gone away for the first time, one of the scouts came running in with the news that they had stopped before Lord Mansfield's house in Bloomsbury Square.

Soon afterwards there came another, and another, and then the first returned again, and so, by little and little, their tale was this:—That the mob gathering round Lord Mansfield's house, had called on those within to open the door, and receiving no reply (for Lord and Lady Mansfield were at that moment escaping by the back-way), forced an entrance according to their usual custom. That they then began to demolish the house with great fury, and setting fire to it in several parts, involved in a common ruin the whole of the costly furniture, the plate and jewels, a beautiful gallery of pictures, the rarest collection of manuscripts ever possessed by any one private person in the world, and worse than all, because nothing could replace this loss, the great Law Library, on almost every page of which were notes in the Judge's own hand, of inestimable value,—being the results of the study and experience of his whole life. That while they were howling and exulting round the fire, a troop of soldiers, with a magistrate among them, came up, and being too late (for the mischief was by that time done), began to disperse the crowd. That the riot act being read, and the crowd still resisting, the soldiers received orders to fire, and levelling their muskets shot dead at the first discharge six men and a woman, and wounded many persons; and loading again directly, fired another volley, but over the people's heads it was supposed, as none were seen to fall. That thereupon, and daunted by the shrieks and tumult, the crowd began to disperse, and the soldiers went away, leaving the killed and wounded on the ground: which they had no sooner done than the rioters came back again, and taking up the dead bodies, and the wounded people, formed into a rude procession, having the bodies in the front. That in this

order, they paraded off with a horrible merriment; fixing weapons in the dead men's hands to make them look as if alive: and preceded by a fellow ringing Lord Mansfield's dinner-bell with all his might.

The scouts reported further, that this party meeting with some others who had been at similar work elsewhere, they all united into one, and drafting off a few men with the killed and wounded, marched away to Lord Mansfield's country-seat at Caen Wood, between Hampstead and Highgate; bent upon destroying that house likewise, and lighting up a great fire there, which from that height should be seen all over London. But in this they were disappointed, for a party of horse having arrived before them, they retreated faster than they went, and came straight back to town.

There being now a great many parties in the streets, each went to work according to its humor, and a dozen houses were quickly blazing, including those of Sir John Fielding and two other justices, and four in Holborn — one of the greatest thoroughfares in London — which were all burning at the same time, and burned until they went out of themselves, for the people cut the engine hose, and would not suffer the firemen to play upon the flames. At one house near Moorfields, they found in one of the rooms some canary birds in cages, and these they cast into the fire alive. The poor little creatures screamed, it was said, like infants, when they were flung upon the blaze; and one man was so touched that he tried in vain to save them, which roused the indignation of the crowd, and nearly cost him his life.

At this same house, one of the fellows who went through the rooms, breaking the furniture and helping to destroy the building, found a child's doll — a poor toy —

which he exhibited at the window to the mob below, as the image of some unholy saint which the late occupants had worshipped. While he was doing this, another man with an equally tender conscience (they had both been foremost in throwing down the canary birds for roasting alive), took his seat on the parapet of the house, and harangued the crowd from a pamphlet circulated by the Association, relative to the true principles of Christianity! Meanwhile the Lord Mayor, with his hands in his pockets, looked on as an idle man might look at any other show, and seem mightily satisfied to have got a good place.

Such were the accounts brought to the old vintner by his servants as he sat at the side of Mr. Haredale's bed, having been unable even to doze, after the first part of the night; too much disturbed by his own fears; by the cries of the mob, the light of the fires, and the firing of the soldiers. Such, with the addition of the release of all the prisoners in the New Jail at Clerkenwell, and as many robberies of passengers in the streets, as the crowd had leisure to indulge in, were the scenes of which Mr. Haredale was happily unconscious, and which were all enacted before midnight.

CHAPTER LXVII.

WHEN darkness broke away and morning began to dawn, the town wore a strange aspect indeed.

Sleep had scarcely been thought of all night. The general alarm was so apparent in the faces of the inhabitants, and its expression was so aggravated by want of rest (few persons, with any property to lose, having dared to go to bed since Monday), that a stranger coming into the streets would have supposed some mortal pest or plague to have been raging. In place of the usual cheerfulness and animation of morning, everything was dead and silent. The shops remained unclosed, offices and warehouses were shut, the coach and chair stands were deserted, no carts or wagons rumbled through the slowly waking streets, the early cries were all hushed; a universal gloom prevailed. Great numbers of people were out, even at daybreak, but they flitted to and fro as though they shrank from the sound of their own footsteps; the public ways were haunted rather than frequented; and round the smoking ruins people stood apart from one another and in silence, not venturing to condemn the rioters, or to be supposed to do so, even in whispers.

At the Lord President's in Piccadilly, at Lambeth Palace, at the Lord Chancellor's in Great Ormond Street, in the Royal Exchange, the Bank, the Guildhall, the Inns of Court, the Courts of Law, and every cham-

ber fronting the streets near Westminster Hall and the Houses of Parliament, parties of soldiers were posted before daylight. A body of Horse-Guards paraded Palace-yard; an encampment was formed in the Park, where fifteen hundred men and five battalions of Militia were under arms; the Tower was fortified, the draw-bridges were raised, the cannon loaded and pointed, and two regiments of artillery busied in strengthening the fortress and preparing it for defence. A numerous detachment of soldiers were stationed to keep guard at the New-River Head, which the people had threatened to attack, and where, it was said, they meant to cut off the main-pipes, so that there might be no water for the extinction of the flames. In the Poultry, and on Cornhill, and at several other leading points, iron chains were drawn across the street; parties of soldiers were distributed in some of the old city churches while it was yet dark; and in several private houses (among them Lord Rockingham's in Grosvenor Square); which were blockaded as though to sustain a siege, and had guns pointed from the windows. When the sun rose, it shone into handsome apartments filled with armed men; the furniture hastily heaped away in corners, and made of little or no account, in the terror of the time — on arms glittering in city chambers, among desks and stools, and dusty books — into little smoky church-yards in odd lanes and by-ways, with soldiers lying down among the tombs, or lounging under the shade of the one old tree, and their pile of muskets sparkling in the light — on solitary sentries pacing up and down in court-yards, silent now, but yesterday resounding with the din and hum of business — everywhere on guard-rooms, gar-risons, and threatening preparations.

As the day crept on, still more unusual sights were witnessed in the streets. The gates of the King's Bench and Fleet Prisons being opened at the usual hour, were found to have notices affixed to them, announcing that the rioters would come that night to burn them down. The Wardens, too well knowing the likelihood there was of this promise being fulfilled, were fain to set their prisoners at liberty, and give them leave to move their goods; so, all day, such of them as had any furniture were occupied in conveying it, some to this place, some to that, and not a few to the brokers' shops, where they gladly sold it for any wretched price those gentry chose to give. There were some broken men among these debtors who had been in jail so long, and were so miserable and destitute of friends, so dead to the world, and utterly forgotten and uncared for, that they implored their jailers not to set them free, and to send them, if need were, to some other place of custody. But they, refusing to comply, lest they should incur the anger of the mob, turned them into the streets, where they wandered up and down hardly remembering the ways untrodden by their feet so long, and crying — such abject things those rotten-hearted jails had made them — as they slunk off in their rags, and dragged their slipshod feet along the pavement.

Even of the three hundred prisoners who had escaped from Newgate, there were some — a few, but there were some — who sought their jailers out and delivered themselves up: preferring imprisonment and punishment to the horrors of such another night as the last. Many of the convicts, drawn back to their old place of captivity by some indescribable attraction, or by a desire to exult over it in its downfall and glut their revenge

by seeing it in ashes, actually went back in broad noon and loitered about the cells. Fifty were retaken at one time on this next day, within the prison walls; but their fate did not deter others, for there they went in spite of everything, and there they were taken in twos and threes, twice or thrice a day, all through the week. Of the fifty just mentioned, some were occupied in endeavoring to rekindle the fire; but in general they seemed to have no object in view but to prowl and lounge about the old place; being often found asleep in the ruins, or sitting talking there, or even eating and drinking, as in a choice retreat.

Besides the notices on the gates of the Fleet and the King's Bench, many similar announcements were left, before one o'clock at noon, at the houses of private individuals; and further, the mob proclaimed their intention of seizing on the Bank, the Mint, the Arsenal at Woolwich, and the Royal Palaces. The notices were seldom delivered by more than one man, who, if it were at a shop, went in, and laid it, with a bloody threat perhaps, upon the counter; or if it were at a private house, knocked at the door, and thrust it in the servant's hand. Notwithstanding the presence of the military in every quarter of the town, and the great force in the Park, these messengers did their errands with impunity all through the day. So did two boys who went down Holborn alone, armed with bars taken from the railings of Lord Mansfield's house, and demanded money for the rioters. So did a tall man on horseback who made a collection for the same purpose in Fleet Street, and refused to take anything but gold.

A rumor had now got into circulation, too, which

diffused a greater dread all through London, even than these publicly announced intentions of the rioters, though all men knew that if they were successfully effected, there must ensue a national bankruptcy and general ruin. It was said that they meant to throw the gates of Bedlam open, and let all the madmen loose. This suggested such dreadful images to the people's minds, and was in deed and act so fraught with new and unimaginable horrors in the contemplation, that it beset them more than any loss or cruelty of which they could foresee the worst, and drove many sane men nearly mad themselves.

So the day passed on: the prisoners moving their goods; people running to and fro in the streets, carrying away their property; groups standing in silence round the ruins; all business suspended; and the soldiers disposed as has been already mentioned, remaining quite inactive. So the day passed on, and dreaded night drew near again.

At last, at seven o'clock in the evening, the privy council issued a solemn proclamation that it was now necessary to employ the military, and that the officers had most direct and effectual orders, by an immediate exertion of their utmost force to repress the disturbances; and warning all good subjects of the king to keep themselves, their servants, and apprentices, within doors that night. There was then delivered out to every soldier on duty, thirty-six rounds of powder and ball; the drums beat; and the whole force was under arms at sunset.

The city authorities, stimulated by those vigorous measures, held a common council; passed a vote thanking the military associations who had tendered their

aid to the civil authorities ; accepted it ; and placed them under the direction of the two sheriffs. At the queen's palace, a double guard, the yeomen on duty, the groom-porters, and all other attendants, were stationed in the passages and on the staircases at seven o'clock, with strict instructions to be watchful on their posts all night ; and all the doors were locked. The gentlemen of the Temple, and the other Inns, mounted guard within their gates, and strengthened them with the great stones of the pavement, which they took up for the purpose. In Lincoln's Inn, they gave up the hall and commons to the Northumberland militia, under the command of Lord Algernon Percy ; in some few of the city wards, the burgesses turned out, and without making a very fierce show, looked brave enough. Some hundreds of stout gentlemen threw themselves, armed to the teeth, into the halls of the different companies, double-locked and bolted all the gates, and dared the rioters (among themselves) to come on at their peril. These arrangements being all made simultaneously, or nearly so, were completed by the time it got dark ; and then the streets were comparatively clear, and were guarded at all the great corners and chief avenues by the troops : while parties of the officers rode up and down in all directions, ordering chance stragglers home, and admonishing the residents to keep within their houses, and, if any firing ensued, not to approach the windows. More chains were drawn across such of the thoroughfares as were of a nature to favor the approach of a great crowd, and at each of these points a considerable force was stationed. All these precautions having been taken and it being now quite dark, those in command awaited the result in some anxiety : and not without a hope that

such vigilant demonstrations might of themselves dishearten the populace, and prevent any new outrages.

But in this reckoning they were cruelly mistaken, for in half an hour, or less, as though the setting in of night had been their preconcerted signal, the rioters having previously, in small parties, prevented the lighting of the street-lamps, rose like a great sea; and that in so many places at once, and with such inconceivable fury, that those who had the direction of the troops knew not, at first, where to turn or what to do. One after another, new fires blazed up in every quarter of the town, as though it were the intention of the insurgents to wrap the city in a circle of flames, which, contracting by degrees, should burn the whole to ashes; the crowd swarmed and roared in every street; and none but rioters and soldiers being out of doors, it seemed to the latter as if all London were arrayed against them, and they stood alone against the town.

In two hours, six-and-thirty fires were raging — six-and-thirty great conflagrations. Among them the Borough Clink in Tooley-street, the King's Bench, the Fleet, and the New Bridewell. In almost every street, there was a battle; and in every quarter the muskets of the troops were heard above the shouts and tumult of the mob. The firing began in the Poultry, where the chain was drawn across the road, where nearly a score of people were killed on the first discharge. Their bodies having been hastily carried into St. Mildred's church by the soldiers, the latter fired again, and following fast upon the crowd, who began to give way when they saw the execution that was done, formed across Cheapside, and charged them at the point of the bayonet.

The streets were now a dreadful spectacle. The shouts of the rabble, the shrieks of women, the cries of the wounded, and the constant firing formed a deafening and an awful accompaniment to the sights which every corner presented. Wherever the road was obstructed by the chains, there the fighting and the loss of life were greatest; but there was hot work and bloodshed in almost every leading thoroughfare.

At Holborn Bridge, and on Holborn Hill, the confusion was greater than in any other part; for the crowd that poured out of the city in two great streams, one by Ludgate Hill, and one by Newgate-street, united at that spot, and formed a mass so dense, that at every volley the people seemed to fall in heaps. At this place a large detachment of soldiery were posted, who fired, now up Fleet Market, now up Holborn, now up Snow Hill — constantly raking the streets in each direction. At this place too, several large fires were burning, so that all the terrors of that terrible night seemed to be concentrated in one spot.

Full twenty times, the rioters, headed by one man who wielded an axe in his right hand, and bestrode a brewer's horse of great size and strength, caparisoned with fetters taken out of Newgate, which clanked and jingled as he went, made an attempt to force a passage at this point, and fire the vintner's house. Full twenty times they were repulsed with loss of life, and still came back again: and though the fellow at their head was marked and singled out by all, and was a conspicuous object as the only rioter on horseback, not a man could hit him. So surely as the smoke cleared away, so surely there was he; calling hoarsely to his companions, brandishing his axe above his head, and

dashing on as though he bore a charmed life, and was proof against ball and powder.

This man was Hugh; and in every part of the riot, he was seen. He headed two attacks upon the Bank, helped to break open the Toll-houses on Blackfriars Bridge, and cast the money into the street: fired two of the prisons with his own hand: was here, and there, and everywhere — always foremost — always active — striking at the soldiers, cheering on the crowd, making his horse's iron music heard through all the yell and uproar: but never hurt or stopped. Turn him at one place, and he made a new struggle in another; force him to retreat at this point, and he advanced on that, directly. Driven from Holborn for the twentieth time, he rode at the head of a great crowd straight upon Saint Paul's, attacked a guard of soldiers who kept watch over a body of prisoners within the iron railings, forced them to retreat, rescued the men they had in custody, and with this accession to his party, came back again, mad with liquor and excitement, and hallooing them on like a demon.

It would have been no easy task for the most careful rider to sit a horse in the midst of such a throng and tumult; but though this madman rolled upon his back (he had no saddle) like a boat upon the sea, he never for an instant lost his seat, or failed to guide him where he would. Through the very thickest of the press, over dead bodies and burning fragments, now on the pavement, now in the road, now riding up a flight of steps to make himself the more conspicuous to his party, and now forcing a passage through a mass of human beings, so closely squeezed together that it seemed as if the edge of a knife would scarcely part them, — on he went, as

though he could surmount all obstacles by the mere exercise of his will. And perhaps his not being shot was in some degree attributable to this very circumstance : for his extreme audacity, and the conviction that he must be one of those to whom the proclamation referred, inspired the soldiers with a desire to take him alive, and diverted many an aim which otherwise might have been more near the mark.

The vintner and Mr. Haredale, unable to sit quietly listening to the noise without seeing what went on, had climbed to the roof of the house, and hiding behind a stack of chimneys, were looking cautiously down into the street, almost hoping that after so many repulses the rioters would be foiled, when a great shout proclaimed that a party were coming round the other way ; and the dismal jingling of those accursed fetters warned them next moment that they too were led by Hugh. The soldiers had advanced into Fleet Market and were dispersing the people there ; so that they came on with hardly any check, and were soon before the house.

"All's over now," said the vintner. "Fifty thousand pounds will be scattered in a minute. We must save ourselves. We can do no more, and shall have reason to be thankful if we do as much."

Their first impulse was, to clamber along the roofs of the houses, and, knocking at some garret-window for admission, pass down that way into the street, and so escape. But another fierce cry from below, and a general upturning of the faces of the crowd, apprised them that they were discovered, and even that Mr. Haredale was recognized ; for Hugh, seeing him plainly in the bright glare of the fire, which in that part made it as light as day, called to him by his name, and swore to have his life.

“Leave me here,” said Mr. Haredale, “and in Heaven’s name, my good friend, save yourself! Come on!” he muttered, as he turned towards Hugh and faced him without any further effort at concealment: “This roof is high, and if we close, we will die together!”

“Madness,” said the honest vintner, pulling him back, “sheer madness. Hear reason, sir. My good sir, hear reason. I could never make myself heard by knocking at a window now; and even if I could, no one would be bold enough to connive at my escape. Through the cellars, there’s a kind of passage into the back street by which we roll casks in and out. We shall have time to get down there, before they can force an entry. Do not delay an instant, but come with me — for both our sakes — for mine — my dear good sir!”

As he spoke, and drew Mr. Haredale back, they had both a glimpse of the street. It was but a glimpse, but it showed them the crowd, gathering and clustering round the house: some of the armed men pressing to the front to break down the doors and windows, some bringing brands from the nearest fire, some with lifted faces following their course upon the roof and pointing them out to their companions: all raging and roaring like the flames they lighted up. They saw some men thirsting for the treasures of strong liquor which they knew were stored within; they saw others, who had been wounded, sinking down into the opposite doorways and dying, solitary wretches, in the midst of all the vast assemblage; here, a frightened woman trying to escape; and there a lost child; and there a drunken ruffian, unconscious of the death-wound on his head, raving and fighting to the last. All these things, and even such trivial incidents as a man with his hat off, or turning round, or stooping

down, or shaking hands with another, they marked distinctly ; yet in a glance so brief, that, in the act of stepping back, they lost the whole, and saw but the pale faces of each other, and the red sky above them.

Mr. Haredale yielded to the entreaties of his companion — more because he was resolved to defend him, than for any thought he had of his own life, or any care he entertained for his own safety — and quickly reëntering the house, they descended the stairs together. Loud blows were thundering on the shutters, crowbars were already thrust beneath the door, the glass fell from the sashes, a deep light shone through every crevice, and they heard the voices of the foremost in the crowd so close to every chink and key-hole, that they seemed to be hoarsely whispering their threats into their very ears. They had but a moment reached the bottom of the cellar-steps and shut the door behind them, when the mob broke in.

The vaults were profoundly dark, and having no torch or candle — for they had been afraid to carry one, lest it should betray their place of refuge — they were obliged to grope with their hands. But they were not long without light, for they had not gone far when they heard the crowd forcing the door ; and, looking back among the low-arched passages, could see them in the distance, hurrying to and fro with flashing links, broaching the casks, staving the great vats, turning off upon the right hand and the left, into the different cellars, and lying down to drink at the channels of strong spirits which were already flowing on the ground.

They hurried on, not the less quickly for this ; and had reached the only vault which lay between them and the passage out, when suddenly, from the direction in



which they were going, a strong light gleamed upon their faces; and before they could slip aside, or turn back, or hide themselves, two men (one bearing a torch) came upon them, and cried in an astonished whisper, "Here they are!"

At the same instant they pulled off what they wore upon their heads. Mr. Haredale saw before him Edward Chester, and then saw, when the vintner gasped his name, Joe Willet.

Ay, the same Joe, though with an arm the less, who used to make the quarterly journey on the gray mare to pay the bill to the purple-faced vintner; and that very same purple-faced vintner, formerly of Thames Street, now looked him in the face, and challenged him by name.

"Give me your hand," said Joe softly, taking it whether the astonished vintner would or no. "Don't fear to shake it; it's a friendly one and a hearty one, though it has no fellow. Why, how well you look and how bluff you are! And you — God bless you, sir. Take heart, take heart. We'll find them. Be of good cheer; we have not been idle."

There was something so honest and frank in Joe's speech, that Mr. Haredale put his hand in his involuntarily, though their meeting was suspicious enough. But his glance at Edward Chester, and that gentleman's keeping aloof, were not lost upon Joe, who said bluntly, glancing at Edward while he spoke: —

"Times are changed, Mr. Haredale, and times have come when we ought to know friends from enemies, and make no confusion of names. Let me tell you that but for this gentleman, you would most likely have been dead by this time, or badly wounded at the best."

"What do you say?" asked Mr. Haredale.

"I say," said Joe, "first, that it was a bold thing to be in the crowd at all disguised as one of them; though I won't say much about that, on second thoughts, for that's my case too. Secondly, that it was a brave and glorious action — that's what I call it — to strike that fellow off his horse before their eyes!"

"What fellow! Whose eyes!"

"What fellow, sir!" cried Joe: "a fellow who has no good-will to you, and who has the daring and deviltry in him of twenty fellows. I know him of old. Once in the house, *he* would have found you, here or anywhere. The rest owe you no particular grudge, and, unless they see you, will only think of drinking themselves dead. But we lose time. Are you ready?"

"Quite," said Edward. "Put out the torch, Joe, and go on. And be silent, there's a good fellow."

"Silent or not silent," murmured Joe, as he dropped the flaring link upon the ground, crushed it with his foot, and gave his hand to Mr. Haredale, "it was a brave and glorious action; — no man can alter that."

Both Mr. Haredale and the worthy vintner were too amazed and too much hurried to ask any further questions, so followed their conductors in silence. It seemed, from a short whispering which presently ensued between them and the vintner relative to the best way of escape, that they had entered by the back-door, with the connivance of John Grueby, who watched outside with the key in his pocket, and whom they had taken into their confidence. A part of the crowd coming up that way, just as they entered, John had double-locked the door again, and made off for the soldiers, so that means of retreat was cut from under them.

However, as the front-door had been forced, and this minor crowd being anxious to get at the liquor, had no fancy for losing time in breaking down another, but had gone round and got in from Holborn with the rest, the narrow lane in the rear was quite free of people. So, when they had crawled through the passage indicated by the vintner (which was a mere shelving-trap for the admission of casks), and had managed with some difficulty to unchain and raise the door at the upper end, they emerged into the street without being observed or interrupted. Joe still holding Mr. Haredale tight, and Edward taking the same care of the vintner, they hurried through the streets at a rapid pace; occasionally standing aside to let some fugitives go by, or to keep out of the way of the soldiers who followed them, and whose questions, when they halted to put any, were speedily stopped by one whispered word from Joe.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

WHILE Newgate was burning on the previous night, Barnaby and his father, having been passed among the crowd from hand to hand, stood in Smithfield, on the outskirts of the mob, gazing at the flames like men who had been suddenly aroused from sleep. Some moments elapsed before they could distinctly remember where they were, or how they got there; or recollected that while they were standing idle and listless spectators of the fire, they had tools in their hands which had been hurriedly given them that they might free themselves from their fetters.

Barnaby, heavily ironed as he was, if he had obeyed his first impulse, or if he had been alone, would have made his way back to the side of Hugh, who to his clouded intellect now shone forth with the new lustre of being his preserver and truest friend. But his father's terror of remaining in the streets, communicated itself to him when he comprehended the full extent of his fears, and impressed him with the same eagerness to fly to a place of safety.

In a corner of the market among the pens for cattle, Barnaby knelt down, and pausing every now and then to pass his hand over his father's face, or look up to him with a smile, knocked off his irons. When he had seen aim spring, a free man, to his feet, and had given vent to the transport of delight which the sight awakened, he

went to work upon his own, which soon fell rattling down upon the ground, and left his limbs unfettered.

Gliding away together when this task was accomplished, and passing several groups of men, each gathered round a stooping figure to hide him from those who passed, but unable to repress the clanking sound of hammers, which told that they were too busy at the same work, — the two fugitives made towards Clerkenwell, and passing thence to Islington, as the nearest point of egress, were quickly in the fields. After wandering about for a long time, they found in a pasture near Finchley a poor shed, with walls of mud, and roof of grass and brambles, built for some cowherd, but now deserted. Here, they lay down for the rest of the night.

They wandered to and fro when it was day, and once Barnaby went off alone to a cluster of little cottages two or three miles away, to purchase some bread and milk. But finding no better shelter, they returned to the same place, and lay down again to wait for night.

Heaven alone can tell with what vague thoughts of duty and affection ; with what strange promptings of nature, intelligible to him as to a man of radiant mind and most enlarged capacity ; with what dim memories of children he had played with when a child himself, who had prattled of their fathers, and of loving them, and being loved ; with how many half-remembered, dreamy associations of his mother's grief and tears and widowhood ; he watched and tended this man. But that a vague and shadowy crowd of such ideas came slowly on him ; that they taught him to be sorry when he looked upon his haggard face, that they overflowed his eyes when he stooped to kiss him, that they kept him waking in a tearful gladness, shading him from the sun,

fanning him with leaves, soothing him when he started in his sleep — ah! what a troubled sleep it was — and wondering when *she* would come to join them and be happy, is the truth. He sat beside him all that day listening for her footsteps in every breath of air, looking for her shadow on the gently waving grass, twining the hedge flowers for her pleasure when she came, and his when he awoke; and stooping down from time to time to listen to his mutterings, and wonder why he was so restless in that quiet place. The sun went down, and night came on, and he was still quite tranquil; busied with these thoughts, as if there were no other people in the world, and the dull cloud of smoke hanging on the immense city in the distance, hid no vices, no crimes, no life or death, or causes of disquiet — nothing but clear air.

But the hour had now come when he must go alone to find out the blind man, (a task that filled him with delight,) and bring him to that place; taking especial care that he was not watched or followed on his way back. He listened to the directions he must observe, repeated them again and again, and after twice or thrice returning to surprise his father with a light-hearted laugh, went forth, at last upon his errand: leaving Grip, whom he had carried from the jail in his arms, to his care.

Fleet of foot, and anxious to return, he sped swiftly on towards the city, but could not reach it before the fires began, and made the night angry with their dismal lustre. When he entered the town — it might be that he was changed by going there without his late companions, and on no violent errand; or by the beautiful solitude in which he had passed the day, or by the

thoughts that had come upon him, — but it seemed peopled by a legion of devils. This flight and pursuit, this cruel burning and destroying, these dreadful cries and stunning noises, were *they* the good lord's noble cause!

Though almost stupefied by the bewildering scene, still he found the blind man's house. It was shut up and tenantless. He waited for a long while, but no one came. At last he withdrew; and as he knew by this time that the soldiers were firing, and many people must have been killed, he went down into Holborn, where he heard the great crowd was, to try if he could find Hugh, and persuade him to avoid the danger, and return with him.

If he had been stunned and shocked before, his horror was increased a thousand-fold when he got into this vortex of the riot, and not being an actor in the terrible spectacle, had it all before his eyes. But there, in the midst, towering above them all, close before the house they were attacking now, was Hugh on horseback, calling to the rest!

Sickened by the sights surrounding him on every side, and by the heat and roar, and crash, he forced his way among the crowd (where many recognized him, and with shouts pressed back to let him pass), and in time was nearly up with Hugh, who was savagely threatening some one, but whom, or what he said, he could not, in the great confusion, understand. At that moment the crowd forced their way into the house, and Hugh — it was impossible to see by what means, in such a concourse — fell headlong down.

Barnaby was beside him when he staggered to his feet. It was well he made him hear his voice, or

Hugh, with his uplifted axe, would have cleft his skull in twain.

"Barnaby — you! Whose hand was that, that struck me down?"

"Not mine."

"Whose! — I say, whose!" he cried, reeling back, and looking wildly round. "What are we doing? Where is he? Show me!"

"You are hurt," said Barnaby — as indeed he was, in the head, both by the blow he had received, and by his horse's hoof. "Come away with me."

As he spoke, he took the horse's bridle in his hand, turned him, and dragged Hugh several paces. This brought them out of the crowd, which was pouring from the street into the vintner's cellars.

"Where's — where's Dennis?" said Hugh, coming to a stop and checking Barnaby with his strong arm. "Where has he been all day? What did he mean by leaving me as he did, in the jail, last night? Tell me, you — d' ye hear!"

With a flourish of his dangerous weapon, he fell down upon the ground like a log. After a minute, though already frantic with drinking and with the wound in his head, he crawled to a stream of burning spirit which was pouring down the kennel, and began to drink at it as if it were a brook of water.

Barnaby drew him away and forced him to rise. Though he could neither stand nor walk, he involuntarily staggered to his horse, climbed upon his back, and clung there. After vainly attempting to divest the animal of his clanking trappings, Barnaby sprung up behind him, snatched the bridle, turned into **Leather Lane**, which was close at hand, and urged the frightened horse into a heavy trot.

He looked back, once, before he left the street; and looked upon a sight not easily to be erased, even from his remembrance, so long as he had life.

The vintner's house with half a dozen others near at hand, was one great, glowing blaze. All right, no one had essayed to quench the flames or stop their progress: but now a body of soldiers were actively engaged in pulling down two old wooden houses, which were every moment in danger of taking fire, and which could scarcely fail, if they were left to burn, to extend the conflagration immensely. The tumbling down of nodding walls and heavy blocks of wood, the hooting and the execrations of the crowd, the distant firing of other military detachments, the distracted looks and cries of those whose habitations were in danger, the hurrying to and fro of frightened people with their goods; the reflections in every quarter of the sky, of deep, red, soaring flames, as though the last day had come and the whole universe were burning; the dust, and smoke, and drift of fiery particles, scorching and kindling all it fell upon; the hot unwholesome vapor, the blight on everything; the stars, and moon, and very sky obliterated; — made up such a sum of dreariness and ruin, that it seemed as if the face of Heaven were blotted out, and night, in its rest and quiet, and softened light, never could look upon the earth again.

But there was a worse spectacle than this — worse by far than fire and smoke, or even the rabble's unappeasable and maniac rage. The gutters of the street, and every crack and fissure in the stones, ran with scorching spirit, which, being dammed up by busy hands, overflowed the road and pavement, and formed a great pool in which the people dropped down dead by dozens.

They lay in heaps all round this fearful pond, husbands and wives, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, women with children in their arms and babies at their breasts, and drank until they died. While some stooped with their lips to the brink and never raised their heads again, others sprang up from their fiery draught, and danced, half in a mad triumph, and half in the agony of suffocation, until they fell, and steeped their corpses in the liquor that had killed them. Nor was even this the worst or most-appalling kind of death that happened on this fatal night. From the burning cellars, where they drank out of hats, pails, buckets, tubs, and shoes, some men were drawn, alive, but all alight from head to foot; who, in their unendurable anguish and suffering, making for anything that had the look of water, rolled, hissing, in this hideous lake, and splashed up liquid fire which lapped in all it met with as it ran along the surface, and neither spared the living nor the dead. On this last night of the great riots — for the last night it was — the wretched victims of a senseless outcry, became themselves the dust and ashes of the flames they had kindled, and strewed the public streets of London.

With all he saw in this last glance fixed indelibly upon his mind, Barnaby hurried from the city which enclosed such horrors; and holding down his head that he might not even see the glare of the fires upon the quiet landscape, was soon in the still country roads.

He stopped at about half a mile from the shed where his father lay, and with some difficulty making Hugh sensible that he must dismount, sunk the horse's furniture in a pool of stagnant water, and turned the animal loose. That done, he supported his companion as well as he could, and led him slowly forward.

CHAPTER LXIX.

It was the dead of night, and very dark, when Barnaby, with his stumbling comrade, approached the place where he had left his father; but he could see him stealing away into the gloom, distrustful even of him, and rapidly retreating. After calling to him twice or thrice that there was nothing to fear, but without effect, he suffered Hugh to sink upon the ground, and followed to bring him back.

He continued to creep away, until Barnaby was close upon him; then turned, and said in a terrible, though suppressed voice:

"Let me go. Do not lay hands upon me. You have told her; and you and she together have betrayed me!"

Barnaby looked at him, in silence.

"You have seen your mother!"

"No," cried Barnaby, eagerly. "Not for a long time — longer than I can tell. A whole year, I think. Is she here?"

His father looked upon him steadfastly for a few moments, and then said — drawing nearer to him as he spoke, for, seeing his face, and hearing his words, it was impossible to doubt his truth:—

"What man is that?"

"Hugh — Hugh. Only Hugh. You know him. *He* will not harm you. Why, you're afraid of Hugh! *Ha*. *ha*, *ha*! Afraid of gruff, old, noisy Hugh!"

"What man is he, I ask you?" he rejoined so fiercely, that Barnaby stopped in his laugh, and shrinking back, surveyed him with a look of terrified amazement.

"Why, how stern you are! You make me fear you though you are my father. Why do you speak to me so?"

—"I want," he answered, putting away the hand which his son with a timid desire to propitiate him laid upon his sleeve, — "I want an answer, and you give me only jeers and questions. Who have you brought with you to this hiding-place, poor fool; and where is the blind man?"

"I don't know where. His house was close shut. I waited, but no person came; that was no fault of mine. This is Hugh — brave Hugh, who broke into that ugly jail, and set us free. Aha! You like him now, do you? You like him now!"

"Why does he lie upon the ground?"

"He has had a fall, and has been drinking. The fields and trees go round, and round, and round with him, and the ground heaves under his feet. You know him? You remember? See!"

They had by this time returned to where he lay, and both stooped over him to look into his face.

"I recollect the man," his father murmured. "Why did you bring him here?"

"Because he would have been killed if I had left him over yonder. They were firing guns and shedding blood. Does the sight of blood turn you sick, father? I see it does by your face. That's like me — What are you looking at?"

"At nothing!" said the murderer softly, as he started back a pace or two, and gazed with sunken

jaw and staring eyes above his son's head. "At nothing!"

He remained in the same attitude and with the same expression on his face for a minute or more; then glanced slowly round as if he had lost something; and went shivering back, towards the shed.

"Shall I bring him in, father?" asked Barnaby, who had looked on wondering.

He only answered with a suppressed groan, and lying down upon the ground, wrapped his cloak about his head, and shrunk into the darkest corner.

Finding that nothing would rouse Hugh now, or make him sensible for a moment, Barnaby dragged him along the grass, and laid him on a little heap of refuse hay and straw which had been his own bed; first having brought some water from a running stream hard by, and washed his wound, and laved his hands and face. Then he lay down himself, between the two, to pass the night; and looking at the stars, fell fast asleep.

Awakened early in the morning, by the sunshine and the songs of birds, and hum of insects, he left them sleeping in the hut, and walked into the sweet and pleasant air. But he felt that on his jaded senses, oppressed and burdened with the dreadful scenes of last night, and many nights before, all the beauties of opening day, which he had so often tasted, and in which he had had such deep delight, fell heavily. He thought of the blithe mornings when he and the dogs went bounding on together through the woods and fields; and the recollection filled his eyes with tears. He had no consciousness, God help him, of having done wrong, nor had he any new perception of the merits of the cause in which he had been engaged, or those of the men who advocated

it; but he was full of cares now, and regrets, and dismal recollections, and wishes (quite unknown to him before) that this or that event had never happened, and that the sorrow and suffering of so many people had been spared. And now he began to think how happy they would be — his father, mother, he, and Hugh — if they rambled away together, and lived in some lonely place, where there were none of these troubles; and that perhaps the blind man, who had talked so wisely about gold, and told him of the great secrets he knew, could teach them how to live without being pinched by want. As this occurred to him, he was the more sorry that he had not seen him last night; and he was still brooding over this regret, when his father came, and touched him on the shoulder.

"Ah!" cried Barnaby, starting from his fit of thoughtfulness. "Is it only you?"

"Who should it be?"

"I almost thought," he answered, "it was the blind man. I must have some talk with him, father."

"And so must I, for without seeing him, I don't know where to fly or what to do, and lingering here is death. You must go to him again, and bring him here."

"Must I!" cried Barnaby, delighted; "that's brave father. That's what I want to do."

"But you must bring only him, and none other. And though you wait at his door a whole day and night, still you must wait, and not come back without him."

"Don't you fear that," he cried gayly. "He shall come, he shall come."

"Trim off these gewgaws," said his father, plucking the scraps of ribbon and the feathers from his hat, "and over your own dress wear my cloak. Take heed how you go, and they will be too busy in the streets to notice

you. Of your coming back you need take no account, for he'll manage that, safely."

"To be sure!" said Barnaby. "To be sure he will! A wise man, father, and one who can teach us to be rich! Oh! I know him, I know him!"

He was speedily dressed, and as well disguised as he could be. With a lighter heart he then set off upon his second journey, leaving Hugh, who was still in a drunken stupor, stretched upon the ground within the shed, and his father walking to and fro before it.

The murderer, full of anxious thoughts, looked after him, and paced up and down, disquieted by every breath of air that whispered among the boughs, and by every light shadow thrown by the passing clouds upon the daisied ground. He was anxious for his safe return, and yet, though his own life and safety hung upon it, felt a relief while he was gone. In the intense selfishness which the constant presence before him of his great crimes, and their consequences here and hereafter, engendered, every thought of Barnaby, as his son, was swallowed up and lost. Still, his presence was a torture and reproach; in his wild eyes there were terrible images of that guilty night; with his unearthly aspect, and his half-formed mind, he seemed to the murderer a creature who had sprung into existence from his victim's blood. He could not bear his look, his voice, his touch; and yet he was forced, by his own desperate condition and his only hope of cheating the gibbet, to have him by his side, and to know that he was inseparable from his single chance of escape.

He walked to and fro, with little rest, all day, revolving these things in his mind; and still Hugh lay, unconscious, in the shed. At length, when the sun was setting,

Barnaby returned, leading the blind man, and talking earnestly to him as they came along together.

The murderer advanced to meet them, and bidding his son go on and speak to Hugh, who had just then staggered to his feet, took his place at the blind man's elbow, and slowly followed, towards the shed.

"Why did you send *him*?" said Stagg. "Don't you know it was the way to have him lost, as soon as found?"

"Would you have had me come myself?" returned the other.

"Humph! Perhaps not. I was before the jail on Tuesday night, but missed you in the crowd. I was out last night, too. There was good work last night — gay work — profitable work" — he added, rattling the money in his pockets.

"Have you" —

— "Seen your good lady? Yes."

"Do you mean to tell me more, or not?"

"I'll tell you all," returned the blind man, with a laugh. "Excuse me — but I love to see you so impatient. There's energy in it."

"Does she consent to say the word that may save me?"

"No," returned the blind man emphatically, as he turned his face towards him. "No. Thus it is. She has been at death's door since she lost her darling — has been insensible, and I know not what. I tracked her to a hospital, and presented myself (with your leave) at her bedside. Our talk was not a long one, for she was weak, and there being people near, I was not quite easy. But I told her all that you and I agreed upon, and pointed out the young gentleman's position in strong terms. She

tried to soften me, but that, of course (as I told her), was lost time. She cried and moaned, you may be sure; all women do. Then, of a sudden, she found her voice and strength, and said that Heaven would help her and her innocent son; and that to Heaven she appealed against us — which she did; in really very pretty language, I assure you. I advised her, as a friend, not to count too much on assistance from any such distant quarter — recommended her to think of it — told her where I lived — said I knew she would send to me before noon, next day — and left her, either in a faint or shamming."

When he had concluded this narration, during which he had made several pauses, for the convenience of cracking and eating nuts, of which he seemed to have a pocketful, the blind man pulled a flask from his pocket, took a draught himself, and offered it to his companion.

"You won't, won't you?" he said, feeling that he pushed it from him. "Well! Then the gallant gentleman who's lodging with you, will. Hallo, bully!"

"Death!" said the other, holding him back. "Will you tell me what I am to do!"

"Do! Nothing easier. Make a moonlight flitting in two hours' time with the young gentleman (he's quite ready to go; I have been giving him good advice as we came along), and get as far from London as you can. Let me know where you are, and leave the rest to me. She *must* come round; she can't hold out long; and as to the chances of your being retaken in the mean while, why it wasn't one man who got out of Newgate, but three hundred. Think of that, for your comfort."

"We must support life. How?"

"How!" repeated the blind man. "By eating and drinking. And how get meat and drink, but by paying

for it! Money!" he cried, slapping his pocket. "Is money the word? Why the streets have been running money. Devil send that the sport's not over yet, for these are jolly times; golden, rare, roaring, scrambling times. Hallo, bully! Hallo! Hallo! Drink, bully drink. Where are ye there! Hallo!"

With such vociferations, and with a boisterous manner which bespoke his perfect abandonment to the general license and disorder, he groped his way toward the shed, where Hugh and Barnaby were sitting on the ground.

"Put it about!" he cried, handing his flask to Hugh. "The kennels run with wine and gold. Guineas and strong water flow from the very pumps. About with it, don't spare it!"

Exhausted, unwashed, unshorn, begrimed with smoke and dust, his hair clotted with blood, his voice quite gone, so that he spoke in whispers; his skin parched up by fever, his whole body bruised and cut, and beaten about, Hugh still took the flask, and raised it to his lips. He was in the act of drinking, when the front of the shed was suddenly darkened, and Dennis stood before them.

"No offence, no offence," said that personage in a conciliatory tone, as Hugh stopped in his draught, and eyed him, with no pleasant look, from head to foot. "No offence, brother. Barnaby here too, eh? How are you, Barnaby? And two other gentlemen! Your humble servant, gentlemen. No offence to *you* either, I hope. Eh, brothers?"

Notwithstanding that he spoke in this very friendly and confident manner, he seemed to have considerable hesitation about entering, and remained outside the roof.

He was rather better dressed than usual: wearing the same suit of threadbare black, it is true, but having round his neck an unwholesome-looking cravat of a yellowish white; and, on his hands, great leather gloves, such as a gardener might wear in following his trade. His shoes were newly greased, and ornamented with a pair of rusty iron buckles; the pack-thread at his knees had been renewed; and where he wanted buttons, he wore pins. Altogether, he had something the look of a tipstaff, or a bailiff's follower, desperately faded, but who had a notion of keeping up the appearance of a professional character, and making the best of the worst means.

"You're very snug here," said Mr. Dennis, pulling out a mouldy pocket-handkerchief, which looked like a decomposed halter, and wiping his forehead in a nervous manner.

"Not snug enough to prevent your finding us, it seems," Hugh answered sulkily.

"Why, I'll tell you what, brother," said Dennis, with a friendly smile, "when you don't want me to know which way you're riding, you must wear another sort of bells on your horse. Ah! I know the sound of them you wore last night, and have got quick ears for 'em; that's the truth. Well, but how are you, brother?"

He had by this time approached, and now ventured to sit down by him.

"How am I?" answered Hugh. "Where were you yesterday? Where did you go when you left me in the jail? Why did you leave me? And what did you mean by rolling your eyes and shaking your fist at me, eh?"

"I shake my fist! — at you, brother!" said Dennis,

gently checking Hugh's uplifted hand, which looked threatening.

"Your stick, then ; it's all one."

"Lord love you, brother, I meant nothing. You don't understand me by half. I shouldn't wonder now," he added, in the tone of a desponding and injured man, "but you thought, because I wanted them chaps left in the prison, that I was a-going to desert the banners?"

Hugh told him, with an oath, that he had thought so.

"Well!" said Mr. Dennis, mournfully, "if you a'n't enough to make a man mistrust his feller-creeturs, I don't know what is. Desert the banners! Me! Ned Dennis, as was so christened by his own father! — Is this axe your'n brother?"

"Yes, it's mine," said Hugh, in the same sullen manner as before ; "it might have hurt you, if you had come in its way once or twice last night. Put it down."

"Might have hurt me!" said Mr. Dennis, still keeping it in his hand, and feeling the edge with an air of abstraction. "Might have hurt me! and me exerting myself all the time to the very best advantage. Here's a world! And you're not a-going to ask me to take a sup out of that 'ere bottle, eh?"

Hugh passed it towards him. As he raised it to his lips, Barnaby jumped up, and motioning them to be silent, looked eagerly out.

"What's the matter, Barnaby?" said Dennis, glancing at Hugh and dropping the flask, but still holding the axe in his hand.

"Hush!" he answered softly. "What do I see glittering behind the hedge?"

"What!" cried the hangman, raising his voice to its

highest pitch, and laying hold of him and Hugh. "Not — not SOLDIERS, surely!"

That moment, the shed was filled with armed men; and a body of horse, galloping into the field, drew up before it.

"There!" said Dennis, who remained untouched among them when they had seized their prisoners; "it's them two young ones, gentlemen, that the proclamation puts a price on. This other's an escaped felon — I'm sorry for it, brother," he added, in a tone of resignation, addressing himself to Hugh; "but you've brought it on yourself; you forced me to do it; you wouldn't respect the soundest constitutional principles, you know; you went and violated the wery framework of society. I had sooner have given away a trifle in charity than done this, I would upon my soul. — If you'll keep fast hold on 'em, gentlemen, I think I can make a shift to tie 'em better than you can."

But this operation was postponed for a few moments by a new occurrence. The blind man, whose ears were quicker than most people's sight, had been alarmed, before Barnaby, by a rustling in the bushes, under cover of which the soldiers had advanced. He retreated instantly — had hidden somewhere for a minute — and probably in his confusion mistaking the point at which he had emerged, was now seen running across the open meadow.

An officer cried directly that he had helped to plunder a house last night. He was loudly called on to surrender. He ran the harder, and in a few seconds would have been out of gun-shot. The word was given, and the men fired.

There was a breathless pause and a profound silence,

during which all eyes were fixed upon him. He had been seen to start at the discharge, as if the report had frightened him. But he neither stopped nor slackened his pace in the least, and ran on full forty yards farther. Then, without one reel or stagger, or sign of faintness or quivering of any limb, he dropped.

Some of them hurried up to where he lay; — the hangman with them. Everything had passed so quickly, that the smoke was not yet scattered, but curled slowly off in a little cloud, which seemed like the dead man's spirit moving solemnly away. There were a few drops of blood upon the grass — more, when they turned him over — that was all.

"Look here! Look here!" said the hangman, stooping one knee beside the body, and gazing up with a disconsolate face at the officer and men. "Here's a pretty sight!"

"Stand out of the way," replied the officer. "Sergeant! see what he had about him."

The man turned his pockets out upon the grass, and counted, besides some foreign coins and two rings, five-and-forty guineas in gold. These were bundled up in a handkerchief and carried away; the body remained there for the present, but six men and the sergeant were left to take it to the nearest public-house.

"Now then, if you're going," said the sergeant, clapping Dennis on the back, and pointing after the officer who was walking towards the shed.

To which Mr. Dennis only replied, "Don't talk to me!" and then repeated what he had said before, namely, "Here's a pretty sight!"

"It's not one that you care for much, I should think," observed the sergeant coolly.

"Why, who," said Mr. Dennis, rising, "should care for it, if I don't?"

"Oh! I didn't know you was so tender-hearted," said the sergeant. "That's all!"

"Tender-hearted!" echoed Dennis. "Tender-hearted! Look at this man. Do you call *this* constitootional? Do you see him shot through and through instead of being worked off like a Briton? Damme, if I know which party to side with. You're as bad as the other. What's to become of the country if the military power's to go a-superseding the ciivilians in this way? Where's this poor fellow-creetur's rights as a citizen, that he didn't have *me* in his last moments! I was here. I was willing. I was ready. These are nice times, brother, to have the dead crying out against us in this way, and sleep comfortably in our beds arterwards; wery nice!"

Whether he derived any material consolation from binding the prisoners, is uncertain; most probably he did. At all events, his being summoned to that work, diverted him, for the time, from these painful reflections, and gave his thoughts a more congenial occupation.

They were not all three carried off together, but in two parties; Barnaby and his father, going by one road in the centre of a body of foot; and Hugh, fast bound upon a horse, and strongly guarded by a troop of cavalry, being taken by another.

They had no opportunity for the least communication, in the short interval which preceded their departure; being kept strictly apart. Hugh only observed that Barnaby walked with a drooping head among his guard, and, without raising his eyes, that he tried to wave his fettered hand when he passed. For himself, he buoyed up his courage as he rode along, with the assurance that

the mob would force his jail wherever it might be, and set him at liberty. But when they got into London, and more especially into Fleet Market, lately the stronghold of the rioters, where the military were rooting out the last remnant of the crowd, he saw that this hope was gone, and felt that he was riding to his death.

CHAPTER LXX.

MR. DENNIS having despatched this piece of business without any personal hurt or inconvenience, and having now retired into the tranquil respectability of private life, resolved to solace himself with half an hour or so of female society. With this amiable purpose in his mind, he bent his steps towards the house where Dolly and Miss Haredale were still confined, and whither Miss Miggs had also been removed by order of Mr. Simon Tappertit.

As he walked along the streets with his leather gloves clasped behind him, and his face indicative of cheerful thought and pleasant calculation, Mr. Dennis might have been likened unto a farmer ruminating among his crops, and enjoying by anticipation the bountiful gifts of Providence. Look where he would, some heap of ruins afforded him rich promise of a working off; the whole town appeared to have been ploughed, and sown, and nurtured by most genial weather; and a goodly harvest was at hand.

Having taken up arms and resorted to deeds of violence, with the great main object of preserving the Old Bailey in all its purity, and the gallows in all its pristine usefulness and moral grandeur, it would perhaps be going too far to assert that Mr. Dennis had ever distinctly contemplated and foreseen this happy state of things. He rather looked upon it as one of those beautiful dispensa-

tions which are inscrutably brought about for the behoof and advantage of good men. He felt, as it were, personally referred to, in this prosperous ripening for the gibbet; and had never considered himself so much the pet and favorite child of Destiny, or loved that lady so well or with such a calm and virtuous reliance, in all his life.

As to being taken up, himself, for a rioter, and punished with the rest, Mr. Dennis dismissed that possibility from his thoughts as an idle chimera; arguing that the line of conduct he had adopted at Newgate, and the service he had rendered that day, would be more than a set-off against any evidence which might identify him as a member of the crowd. That any charge of companionship which might be made against him by those who were themselves in danger, would certainly go for nought. And that if any trivial indiscretion on his part should unluckily come out, the uncommon usefulness of his office, at present, and the great demand for the exercise of its functions, would certainly cause it to be winked at, and passed over. In a word, he had played his cards throughout, with great care; had changed sides at the very nick of time; had delivered up two of the most notorious rioters, and a distinguished felon to boot; and was quite at his ease.

Saving — for there is a reservation; and even Mr. Dennis was not perfectly happy — saving for one circumstance; to wit, the forcible detention of Dolly and Miss Haredale, in a house almost adjoining his own. This was a stumbling-block; for if they were discovered and released, they could, by the testimony they had it in their power to give, place him in a situation of great jeopardy; and to set them at liberty, first extorting from

them an oath of secrecy and silence, was a thing not to be thought of. It was more, perhaps, with an eye to the danger which lurked in this quarter, than from his abstract love of conversation with the sex, that the hangman, quickening his steps, now hastened into their society, cursing the amorous natures of Hugh and Mr. Tappertit with great heartiness, at every step he took.

When he entered the miserable room in which they were confined, Dolly and Miss Haredale withdrew in silence to the remotest corner. But Miss Miggs, who was particularly tender of her reputation, immediately fell upon her knees and began to scream very loud, crying, "What will become of me!" — "Where is my Simmuns!" — "Have mercy, good gentleman, on my sex's weaknesses!" — with other doleful lamentations of that nature, which she delivered with great propriety and decorum.

"Miss, miss," whispered Dennis, beckoning to her with his forefinger, "come here — I won't hurt you. Come here, my lamb, will you?"

On hearing this tender epithet, Miss Miggs who had left off screaming when he opened his lips, and had listened to him attentively, began again: crying, "Oh I'm his lamb! He says I'm his lamb! Oh gracious, why wasn't I born old and ugly! Why was I ever made to be the youngest of six, and all of 'em dead and in their blessed graves, excepting one married sister, which is settled in Golden Lion Court, number twenty-sivin, second bell-handle on the —!"

"Don't I say I a'n't a-going to hurt you?" said Dennis, pointing to a chair. "Why, miss, what's the matter?"

"I don't know what mayn't be the matter!" cried

Miggs, clasping her hands distractedly. "Anything may be the matter!"

"But nothing is, I tell you," said the hangman. "First stop that noise, and come and sit down here, will you, chuckey?"

The coaxing tone in which he said these latter words might have failed in its object, if he had not accompanied them with sundry sharp jerks of his thumb over one shoulder, and with divers winks and thrustings of his tongue into his cheek, from which signals the damsel gathered that he sought to speak to her apart, concerning Miss Haredale and Dolly. Her curiosity being very powerful, and her jealousy by no means inactive, she arose, and with a great deal of shivering and starting back, and much muscular action among all the small bones in her throat, gradually approached him.

"Sit down," said the hangman.

Suiting the action to the word, he thrust her rather suddenly and prematurely into a chair; and designing to reassure her by a little harmless jocularly, such as is adapted to please and fascinate the sex, converted his right forefinger into an ideal bradawl or gimlet, and made as though he would screw the same into her side — whereat Miss Miggs shrieked again, and evinced symptoms of faintness.

"Lovey, my dear," whispered Dennis, drawing his chair close to hers. "When was your young man here last, eh?"

"*My* young man, good gentleman!" answered Miggs in a tone of exquisite distress.

"Ah! Simmuns, you know — him?" said Dennis.

"*Mine* indeed!" cried Miggs, with a burst of bitterness — and as she said it, she glanced towards Dolly. "*Mine*, good gentleman!"

This was just what Mr. Dennis wanted, and expected.

"Ah!" he said, looking so soothingly, not to say amorously on Miggs, that she sat, as she afterwards remarked, on pins and needles of the sharpest White-chapel kind, not knowing what intentions might be suggesting that expression to his features: "I was afraid of that. *I* saw as much, myself. It's her fault. She *will* entice 'em."

"I wouldn't," cried Miggs, folding her hands and looking upwards with a kind of devout blankness, "I wouldn't lay myself out as she does; I wouldn't be as bold as her; I wouldn't seem to say to all male creatures 'come and kiss me'" — and here a shudder quite convulsed her frame — "for any earthly crowns as might be offered. Worlds," Miggs added solemnly, "should not reduce me. No. Not if I was *Wenis*."

"Well, but you *are* *Wenus* you know," said Mr. Dennis, confidentially.

"No, I am not, good gentleman," answered Miggs, shaking her head with an air of self-denial which seemed to imply that she might be if she chose, but she hoped she knew better. "No I am not, good gentleman. Don't charge me with it."

Up to this time she had turned round, every now and then, to where Dolly and Miss Haredale had retired, and uttered a scream, or groan, or laid her hand upon her heart and trembled excessively, with a view of keeping up appearances, and giving them to understand that she conversed with the visitor, under protest and on compulsion, and at a great personal sacrifice, for their common good. But at this point, Mr. Dennis looked so very full of meaning, and gave such a singularly expressive twitch to his face as a request to her to come

still nearer to him, that she abandoned these little arts, and gave him her whole and undivided attention.

"When was Simmuns here, I say?" quoth Dennis, in her ear.

"Not since yesterday morning; and then only for a few minutes. Not all day, the day before."

"You know he meant all along to carry off that one?" said Dennis, indicating Dolly by the slightest possible jerk of his head:—"And to hand you over to somebody else."

Miss Miggs, who had fallen into a terrible state of grief when the first part of this sentence was spoken, recovered a little at the second, and seemed by the sudden check she put upon her tears, to intimate that possibly this arrangement might meet her views; and that it might, perhaps, remain an open question.

—"But unfort'nately," pursued Dennis, who observed this: "somebody else was fond of her too, you see; and even if he wasn't, somebody else is took for a rioter, and it's all over with him."

Miss Miggs relapsed.

"Now, I want," said Dennis, "to clear this house, and to see you righted. What if I was to get her off, out of the way, eh?"

Miss Miggs, brightening again, rejoined, with many breaks and pauses from excess of feeling, that temptations had been Simmuns's bane. That it was not his faults, but hers (meaning Dolly's). That men did not see through these dreadful arts as women did, and therefore was caged and trapped, as Simmun had been. That she had no personal motives to serve—far from it—on the contrary, her intentions was good towards all parties. But forasmuch as she knowed that Simmun, if

united to any designing and artful minxes (she would name no names, for that was not her dispositions) — to *any* designing and artful minxes — must be made miserable and unhappy for life, she *did* incline towards preventions. Such, she added, was her free confessions. But as this was private feelings, and might perhaps be looked upon as vengeance, she begged the gentleman would say no more. Whatever he said, wishing to do her duty by all mankind, even by them as had ever been her bitterest enemies, she would not listen to him. With that she stopped her ears, and shook her head from side to side, to intimate to Mr. Dennis that though he talked until he had no breath left, she was as deaf as any adder.

“Looke here, my sugar-stick,” said Mr. Dennis; “if your view’s the same as mine, and you’ll only be quiet and slip away at the right time, I can have the house clear to-morrow, and be out of this trouble. — Stop though! there’s the other.”

“Which other, sir?” asked Miggs — still with her fingers in her ears and her head shaking obstinately.

“Why, the tallest one, yonder,” said Dennis, as he stroked his chin, and added, in an undertone to himself, something about not crossing Muster Gashford.

Miss Miggs replied (still being profoundly deaf) that if Miss Haredale stood in the way at all, he might make himself quite easy on that score; as she had gathered, from what passed between Hugh and Mr. Tappertit when they were last there, that she was to be removed alone (not by them, but by somebody else), to-morrow night.

Mr. Dennis opened his eyes very wide at this piece of information, whistled once, considered once, and

snally slapped his head once and nodded once, as if he had got the clew to this mysterious removal, and so dismissed it. Then he imparted his design concerning Dolly to Miss Miggs, who was taken more deaf than before, when he began ; and so remained, all through.

The notable scheme was this. Mr. Dennis was immediately to seek out from among the rioters, some daring young fellow (and he had one in his eye, he said), who, terrified by the threats he could hold out to him, and alarmed by the capture of so many who were no better and no worse than he, would gladly avail himself of any help to get abroad, and out of harm's way, with his plunder, even though his journey were encumbered by an unwilling companion ; indeed, the unwilling companion being a beautiful girl, would probably be an additional inducement and temptation. Such a person found, he proposed to bring him there on the ensuing night, when the tall one was taken off, and Miss Miggs had purposely retired ; and then that Dolly should be gagged, muffled in a cloak, and carried in any handy conveyance down to the river's side ; where there were abundant means of getting her smuggled snugly off in any small craft of doubtful character, and no questions asked. With regard to the expense of this removal, he would say, at a rough calculation, that two or three silver tea or coffee pots, with something additional for drink (such as a muffineer or toast-rack), would more than cover it. Articles of plate of every kind having been buried by the rioters in several lonely parts of London, and particularly, as he knew, in St. James's Square, which, though easy of access, was little frequented after dark, and had a

convenient piece of water in the midst, the needful funds were close at hand, and could be had upon the shortest notice. With regard to Dolly, the gentleman would exercise his own discretion. He would be bound to do nothing but to take her away, and keep her away. All other arrangements and dispositions would rest entirely with himself.

If Miss Miggs had had her hearing, no doubt she would have been greatly shocked by the indelicacy of a young female's going away with a stranger, by night (for her moral feelings, as we have said, were of the tenderest kind); but directly Mr. Dennis ceased to speak, she reminded him that he had only wasted breath. She then went on to say (still with her fingers in her ears) that nothing less than a severe practical lesson would save the locksmith's daughter from utter ruin; and that she felt it, as it were, a moral obligation and a sacred duty to the family, to wish that some one would devise one for her reformation. Miss Miggs remarked, and very justly, as an abstract sentiment which happened to occur to her at the moment, that she dared to say the locksmith and his wife would murmur, and repine, if they were ever, by forcible abduction, or otherwise, to lose their child; but that we seldom knew, in this world, what was best for us: such being our sinful and imperfect natures, that very few arrived at that clear understanding.

Having brought their conversation to this satisfactory end, they parted: Dennis, to pursue his design, and take another walk about his farm: Miss Miggs, to launch, when he left her, into such a burst of mental anguish (which she gave them to understand was occasioned by certain tender things he had had the presumption and

audacity to say), that little Dolly's heart was quite melted. Indeed, she said and did so much to soothe the outraged feelings of Miss Miggs, and looked so beautiful while doing so, that if that young maid had not had ample vent for her surpassing spite, in a knowledge of the mischief that was brewing, she must have scratched her features, on the spot.

CHAPTER LXXI.

ALL next day, Emma Haredale, Dolly, and Miggs, remained cooped up together in what had now been their prison for so many days, without seeing any person, or hearing any sound but the murmured conversation, in an outer room, of the men who kept watch over them. There appeared to be more of these fellows than there had been hitherto; and they could no longer hear the voices of women, which they had before plainly distinguished. Some new excitement, too, seemed to prevail among them; for there was much stealthy going in and out, and a constant questioning of those who were newly arrived. They had previously been quite reckless in their behavior; often making a great uproar; quarrelling among themselves, fighting, dancing, and singing. They were now very subdued and silent, conversing almost in whispers, and stealing in and out with a soft and stealthy tread, very different from the boisterous trampling in which their arrivals and departures had hitherto been announced to the trembling captives.

Whether this change was occasioned by the presence among them of some person of authority in their ranks, or by any other cause, they were unable to decide. Sometimes they thought it was in part attributable to there being a sick man in the chamber, for last night there had been a shuffling of feet, as though a burden were brought in, and afterwards a moaning noise. But

they had no means of ascertaining the truth : for any question or entreaty on their parts only provoked a storm of execrations, or something worse ; and they were too happy to be left alone, unassailed by threats or admiration, to risk even that comfort, by any voluntary communication with those who held them in durance.

It was sufficiently evident, both to Emma and to the locksmith's poor little daughter herself, that she, Dolly, was the great object of attraction ; and that so soon as they should have leisure to indulge in the softer passion, Hugh and Mr. Tappertit would certainly fall to blows for her sake ; in which latter case, it was not very difficult to foresee whose prize she would become. With all her old horror of that man revived, and deepened into a degree of aversion and abhorrence which no language can describe ; with a thousand old recollections and regrets, and causes of distress, anxiety, and fear, besetting her on all sides ; poor Dolly Varden — sweet, blooming, buxom Dolly — began to hang her head, and fade, and droop, like a beautiful flower. The color fled from her cheeks, her courage forsook her, her gentle heart failed. Unmindful of all her provoking caprices, forgetful of all her conquests and inconstancy, with all her winning little vanities quite gone, she nestled all the livelong day in Emma Haredale's bosom ; and, sometimes calling on her dear old gray-haired father, sometimes on her mother, and sometimes even on her old home, pined slowly away, like a poor bird in its cage.

Light hearts, light hearts, that float so gayly on a smooth stream, that are so sparkling and buoyant in the sunshine — down upon fruit, bloom upon flowers, blush in summer air, life of the winged insect, whose

whole existence is a day — how soon ye sink in troubled water ! Poor Dolly's heart — a little, gentle, idle, fickle thing ; giddy, restless, fluttering ; constant to nothing but bright looks, and smiles, and laughter — Dolly's heart was breaking.

Emma had known grief, and could bear it better. She had little comfort to impart, but she could soothe and tend her, and she did so ; and Dolly clung to her like a child to its nurse. In endeavoring to inspire her with some fortitude, she increased her own ; and though the nights were long, and the days dismal, and she felt the wasting influence of watching and fatigue, and had perhaps a more defined and clear perception of their destitute condition and its worst dangers, she uttered no complaint. Before the ruffians, in whose power they were, she bore herself so calmly, and with such an appearance, in the midst of all her terror, of a secret conviction that they dared not harm her, that there was not a man among them but held her in some degree of dread ; and more than one believed she had a weapon hidden in her dress, and was prepared to use it.

Such was their condition when they were joined by Miss Miggs, who gave them to understand that she too had been taken prisoner, because of her charms, and detailed such feats of resistance she had performed (her virtue having given her supernatural strength), that they felt it quite a happiness to have her for a champion. Nor was this the only comfort they derived at first from Miggs's presence and society : for that young lady displayed such resignation and long-suffering, and so much meek endurance, under her trials, and breathed in all her chaste discourse a spirit of such holy confidence and resignation, and devout belief that all would happen for

the best, that Emma felt her courage strengthened by the bright example ; never doubting but that everything she said was true, and that she, like them, was torn from all she loved, and agonized by doubt and apprehension. As to poor Dolly, she was roused, at first, by seeing one who came from home ; but when she heard under what circumstances she had left it, and into whose hands her father had fallen, she wept more bitterly than ever, and refused all comfort.

Miss Miggs was at some trouble to reprove her for this state of mind, and to entreat her to take example by herself, who, she said, was now receiving back, with interest, tenfold the amount of her subscriptions to the red-brick dwelling-house, in the articles of peace of mind and a quiet conscience. And, while on serious topics, Miss Miggs considered it her duty to try her hand at the conversion of Miss Haredale ; for whose improvement she launched into a polemical address of some length, in the course whereof, she likened herself unto a chosen missionary, and that young lady to a cannibal in darkness. Indeed she returned so often to these subjects, and so frequently called upon them to take a lesson from her, — at the same time vaunting and, as it were, rioting in, her huge unworthiness, and abundant excess of sin, — that, in the course of a short time, she became, in that small chamber, rather a nuisance than a comfort, and rendered them, if possible, even more unhappy than they had been before.

The night had now come ; and for the first time (for their jailers had been regular in bringing food and candles), they were left in darkness. Any change in their condition in such a place inspired new fears ; and when some hours had passed, and the gloom

was still unbroken, Emma could no longer repress her alarm.

They listened attentively. There was the same murmuring in the outer room, and now and then a moan which seemed to be wrung from a person in great pain, who made an effort to subdue it, but could not. Even these men seemed to be in darkness too; for no light shone through the chinks in the door, nor were they moving, as their custom was, but quite still: the silence being unbroken by so much as the creaking of a board.

At first, Miss Miggs wondered greatly in her own mind who this sick person might be; but arriving, on second thoughts, at the conclusion that he was a part of the schemes on foot, and an artful device soon to be employed with great success, she opined, for Miss Hare-dale's comfort, that it must be some misguided Papist who had been wounded: and this happy supposition encouraged her to say, under her breath, "Ally Looyer!" several times.

"Is it possible," said Emma, with some indignation, "that you who have seen these men committing the outrages you have told us of, and who have fallen into their hands, like us, can exult in their cruelties!"

"Personal considerations, Miss," rejoined Miggs, "sinks into nothing, afore a noble cause. Ally Looyer! Ally Looyer! Ally Looyer, good gentlemen!"

It seemed, from the shrill pertinacity with which Miss Miggs repeated this form of acclamation, that she was calling the same through the key-hole of the door; but in the profound darkness she could not be seen.

"If the time has come — Heaven knows it may come

at any moment — when they are bent on prosecuting the designs, whatever they may be, with which they have brought us here, can you still encourage, and take part with them?" demanded Emma.

"I thank my goodness-gracious-blessed-stars I can, miss," returned Miggs, with increased energy. "Ally Looyer, good gentlemen!"

Even Dolly, cast down and disappointed as she was, revived at this, and bade Miggs hold her tongue directly.

"Which, was you pleased to observe, Miss Varsen?" said Miggs with a strong emphasis on the irrelative pronoun.

Dolly repeated her request.

"Ho, gracious me!" cried Miggs, with hysterical derision. "Ho, gracious me! Yes, to be sure I will. Ho yes! I am a abject slave, and a toiling, moiling, constant-working, always-being-found-fault-with, never-giving-satisfactions, nor-having-no-time-to-clean-one's-self, potter's wessel—a'n't I, miss! Ho yes! My situations is lowly, and my capacities is limited, and my duties is to humble myself afore the base degenerating daughters of their blessed mothers as is fit to keep companies with holy saints but is born to persecutions from wicked relations — and to demean myself before them as is no better than Infidels — a'n't it, miss! Ho yes! My only becoming occupations is to help young flaunting pagins to brush and comb and titiwate theirselves into whitening and suppulchres, and leave the young men to think that there a'n't a bit of padding in it nor no pinching ins nor fillings out nor pomatums nor deceits nor earthly wanities — a'n't it, miss! Yes, to be sure it is — ho yes!"

Having delivered these ironical passages with a most wonderful volubility, and with a shrillness perfectly deafening (especially when she jerked out the interjections), Miss Miggs, from mere habit, and not because weeping was at all appropriate to the occasion, which was one of triumph, concluded by bursting into a flood of tears, and calling in an impassioned manner on the name of Simmuns.

What Emma Haredale and Dolly would have done, or how long Miss Miggs, now that she had hoisted her true colors, would have gone on waving them before their astonished senses, it is impossible to tell. Nor is it necessary to speculate on these matters, for a startling interruption occurred at that moment, which took their whole attention by storm.

This was a violent knocking at the door of the house, and then its sudden bursting open; which was immediately succeeded by a scuffle in the room without, and the clash of weapons. Transported with the hope that rescue had at length arrived, Emma and Dolly shrieked aloud for help; nor were their shrieks unanswered; for after a hurried interval, a man, bearing in one hand a drawn sword, and in the other a taper, rushed into the chamber where they were confined.

It was some check upon their transport to find in this person an entire stranger, but they appealed to him, nevertheless, and besought him, in impassioned language, to restore them to their friends.

"For what other purpose am I here?" he answered, closing the door, and standing with his back against it. "With what object have I made my way to this place, through difficulty and danger, but to preserve you?"

With a joy for which it was impossible to find ade-

quate expression, they embraced each other, and thanked Heaven for this most timely aid. Their deliverer stepped forward for a moment to put the light upon the table, and immediately returning to his former position against the door, bared his head, and looked on smilingly.

"You have news of my uncle, sir?" said Emma, turning hastily towards him.

"And of my father and mother?" added Dolly.

"Yes," he said. "Good news."

"They are alive and unhurt?" they both cried at once.

"Yes, and unhurt," he rejoined.

"And close at hand?"

"I did not say close at hand," he answered smoothly; "they are at no great distance. *Your* friends, sweet one," he added, addressing Dolly, "are within a few hours' journey. You will be restored to them, I hope, to-night."

"My uncle, sir" — faltered Emma.

"Your uncle, dear Miss Haredale, happily — I say happily, because he has succeeded where many of our creed have failed, and is safe — has crossed the sea, and is out of Britain."

"I thank God for it," said Emma, faintly.

"You say well. You have reason to be thankful: greater reason than it is possible for you, who have seen but one night of these cruel outrages, to imagine."

"Does he desire," said Emma, "that I should follow him?"

"Do you ask if he desires it?" cried the stranger in surprise. "If he desires it! But you do not know the danger of remaining in England, the difficulty of escape, or the price hundreds would pay to secure the means,

when you make that inquiry. Pardon me I had forgotten that you could not, being prisoner here."

"I gather, sir," said Emma, after a moment's pause, "from what you hint at, but fear to tell me, that I have witnessed but the beginning, and the least, of the violence to which we are exposed, and that it has not yet slackened in its fury?"

He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, lifted up his hands; and with the same smooth smile, which was not a pleasant one to see, cast his eyes upon the ground, and remained silent.

"You may venture, sir, to speak plain," said Emma, "and to tell me the worst. We have undergone some preparation for it."

But here Dolly interposed, and entreated her not to hear the worst, but the best; and besought the gentleman to tell them the best, and to keep the remainder of his news, until they were safe among their friends again.

"It is told in three words," he said, glancing at the locksmith's daughter with a look of some displeasure. "The people have risen, to a man, against us; the streets are filled with soldiers, who support them and do their bidding. We have no protection but from above, and no safety but in flight; and that is a poor resource; for we are watched on every hand, and detained here, both by force and fraud. Miss Haredale, I cannot bear—believe me, that I cannot bear—by speaking of myself, or what I have done, or am prepared to do, to seem to vaunt my services before you. But, having powerful Protestant connections, and having my whole wealth embarked with theirs, in shipping and commerce, I happily possessed the means of saving your

uncle. I have the means of saving you; and in redemption of my sacred promise, made to him, I am here; pledged not to leave you until I have placed you in his arms. The treachery or penitence of one of the men about you, led to the discovery of your place of confinement; and that I have forced my way here, sword in hand, you see."

"You bring," said Emma, faltering, "some note or token from my uncle?"

"No, he doesn't," cried Dolly, pointing at him earnestly: "now I am sure he doesn't. Don't go with him for the world!"

"Hush, pretty fool — be silent," he replied, frowning angrily upon her. "No, Miss Haredale, I have no letter, nor any token of any kind; for while I sympathize with you, and such as you, on whom misfortune so heavy and so undeserved has fallen, I value my life. I carry, therefore, no writing which, found upon me, would lead to its certain loss. I never thought of bringing any other token, nor did Mr. Haredale think of intrusting me with one — possibly because he had good experience of my faith and honesty, and owed his life to me."

There was a reproof conveyed in these words, which, to a nature like Emma Haredale's, was well addressed. But Dolly, who was differently constituted, was by no means touched by it, and still conjured her, in all the terms of affection and attachment she could think of, not to be lured away.

"Time presses," said their visitor, who, although he sought to express the deepest interest, had something cold and even in his speech, that grated on the ear "and danger surrounds us. If I have exposed myself to it, in vain, let it be so; but if you and he should ever

it again, do me justice. If you decide to remain (as I think you do), remember, Miss Haredale, that I left you with a solemn caution, and acquitting myself of all the consequences to which you expose yourself."

"Stay, sir!" cried Emma — "one moment, I beg you. Cannot we" — and she drew Dolly closer to her — "cannot we go together?"

"The task of conveying one female in safety through such scenes as we must encounter, to say nothing of attracting the attention of those who crowd the streets," he answered, "is enough. I have said that she will be restored to her friends to-night. If you accept the service I tender, Miss Haredale, she shall be instantly placed in safe conduct, and that promise redeemed. Do you decide to remain? People of all ranks and creeds are flying from the town, which is sacked from end to end. Let me be of use in some quarter. Do you stay, or go?"

"Dolly," said Emma, in a hurried manner, "my dear girl, this is our last hope. If we part now, it is only that we may meet again in happiness and honor. I will trust to this gentleman."

"No — no — no!" cried Dolly, clinging to her. "Pray, pray, do not!"

"You hear," said Emma, "that to-night — only to-night — within a few hours — think of that! — you will be among those who would die of grief to lose you, and who are now plunged in the deepest misery for your sake. Pray for me, dear girl, as I will for you; and never forget the many quiet hours we have passed together. Say one 'God bless you!' Say that at parting!"

But Dolly could say nothing; no, not when Emma kissed her cheek a hundred times, and covered it with

tears, could she do more than hang upon her neck, and sob, and clasp, and hold her tight.

"We have time for no more of this," cried the man, unclenching her hands, and pushing her roughly off, as he drew Emma Haredale towards the door: "Now! Quick, outside there! are you ready?"

"Ay!" cried a loud voice, which made him start. "Quite ready! Stand back here, for your lives!"

And in an instant he was felled like an ox in the butcher's shambles — struck down as though a block of marble had fallen from the roof and crushed him — and cheerful light, and beaming faces came pouring in — and Emma was clasped in her uncle's embrace, and Dolly, with a shriek that pierced the air, fell into the arms of her father and mother.

What fainting there was, what laughing, what crying, what sobbing, what smiling, how much questioning, no answering, all talking together, all beside themselves with joy; what kissing, congratulating, embracing, shaking of hands, and falling into all these raptures, over and over and over again; no language can describe.

At length, and after a long time, the old locksmith went up and fairly hugged two strangers, who had stood apart and left them to themselves; and then they saw — whom? Yes, Edward Chester and Joseph Willet.

"See here!" cried the locksmith. "See here! where would any of us have been without these two? Oh, Mr. Edward, Mr. Edward — oh, Joe, Joe, how light, and yet how full you have made my old heart to-night!"

"It was Mr. Edward that knocked him down, sir," said Joe: "I longed to do it, but I gave it up to him. Come, you brave and honest gentleman! Get your senses together, for you haven't long to lie here."

He had his foot upon the breast of their sham deliverer, in the absence of a spare arm; and gave him a gentle roll as he spoke. Gashford, for it was no other crouching, yet malignant, raised his scowling face, like sin subdued, and pleaded to be gently used.

"I have access to all my lord's papers, Mr. Haredale," he said in a submissive voice: Mr. Haredale keeping his back towards him, and not once looking round: "there are very important documents among them. There are a great many in secret drawers, and distributed in various places, known only to my lord and me. I can give some very valuable information, and render important assistance to any inquiry. You will have to answer it if I receive ill usage."

"Pah!" cried Joe, in deep disgust. "Get up, man: you're waited for, outside. Get up, do you hear?"

Gashford slowly rose; and picking up his hat, and looking with a baffled malevolence, yet with an air of despicable humility all round the room, crawled out.

"And now, gentlemen," said Joe, who seemed to be the spokesman of the party, for all the rest were silent; "the sooner we get back to the Black Lion, the better, perhaps."

Mr. Haredale nodded assent, and drawing his niece's arm through his, and taking one of her hands between his own, passed out straightway; followed by the locksmith, Mrs. Varden, and Dolly — who would scarcely have presented a sufficient surface for all the hugs and caresses they bestowed upon her though she had been a dozen Dollys. Edward Chester and Joe followed.

And did Dolly never once look behind — not once? Was there not one little fleeting glimpse of the dark eyelash, almost resting on her flushed cheek, and of the

downcast sparkling eye it shaded? Joe thought ~~there~~ was — and he is not likely to have been mistaken; for there were not many eyes like Dolly's, that's the truth.

The outer room through which they had to pass, was full of men; among them, Mr. Dennis, in safe keeping; and there, had been since yesterday, lying in hiding behind a wooden screen which was now thrown down, Simon Tappertit, the recreant 'Prentice, burnt and bruised, and with a gun-shot wound in his body; and his legs — his perfect legs, the pride and glory of his life, the comfort of his whole existence — crushed into shapeless ugliness. Wondering no longer at the moans they had heard, Dolly crept closer to her father, and shuddered at the sight: but neither bruises, burns, nor gun-shot wound, nor all the torture of his shattered limbs, sent half so keen a pang to Simon's breast, as Dolly passing out, with Joe for her preserver.

A coach was ready at the door, and Dolly found herself safe and whole inside, between her father and mother, with Emma Haredale, and her uncle, quite real, sitting opposite. But there was no Joe, no Edward; and they had said nothing. They had only bowed once, and kept at a distance. Dear heart! what a long way it was to the Black Lion.

CHAPTER LXXII.

THE Black Lion was so far off, and occupied such a length of time in the getting at, that notwithstanding the strong presumptive evidence she had about her of the late events being real and of actual occurrence, Dolly could not divest herself of the belief that she must be in a dream which was lasting all night. Nor was she quite certain that she saw and heard with her own proper senses, even when the coach, in the fulness of time, stopped at the Black Lion, and the host of that tavern approached in a gush of cheerful light to help them to dismount, and give them hearty welcome.

There too, at the coach-door, one on one side, one upon the other, were already Edward Chester, and Joe Willet, who must have followed in another coach: and this was such a strange and unaccountable proceeding, that Dolly was the more inclined to favor the idea of her being fast asleep. But when Mr. Willet appeared — old John himself — so heavy-headed and obstinate, and with such a double chin as the liveliest imagination could never in its boldest flights have conjured up in all its vast proportions — then she stood corrected, and unwillingly admitted to herself that she was broad awake.

And Joe had lost an arm — he — that well-made, handsome, gallant fellow! As Dolly glanced towards him, and thought of the pain he must have suffered, and the far-off places in which he had been wandering, and

wondered who had been his nurse, and hoped that whoever it was, she had been as kind and gentle and considerate as she would have been, the tears came rising to her bright eyes, one by one, little by little, until she could keep them back no longer, and so, before them all, wept bitterly.

"We are all safe now, Dolly," said her father, kindly. "We shall not be separated any more. Cheer up, my love, cheer up!"

The locksmith's wife knew better perhaps, than he, what ailed her daughter. But Mrs. Varden being quite an altered woman—for the riots had done that good—added her word to his, and comforted her with similar representations.

"Mayhap," said Mr. Willet, senior, looking round upon the company, "she's hungry. That's what it is, depend upon it—I am myself."

The Black Lion, who, like old John, had been waiting supper past all reasonable and conscionable hours, hailed this as a philosophical discovery of the profoundest and most penetrating kind; and the table being already spread, they sat down to supper straightway.

The conversation was not of the liveliest nature, nor were the appetites of some among them very keen. But in both these respects, old John more than atoned for any deficiency on the part of the rest, and very much distinguished himself.

It was not in point of actual conversation that Mr. Willet shone so brilliantly, for he had none of his old ironies to "tackle," and was rather timorous of venturing on Joe; having certain vague misgivings within him, that he was ready on the shortest notice, and on receipt of the slightest offence, to fell the Black Lion to the

floor of his own parlor, and immediately withdraw to China or some other remote and unknown region, there to dwell for evermore, or at least until he had got rid of his remaining arm and both legs, and perhaps an eye or so, into the bargain. It was with a peculiar kind of pantomime that Mr. Willet filled up every pause; and in this he was considered by the Black Lion, who had been his familiar for some years, quite to surpass and go beyond himself, and outrun the expectations of his most admiring friends.

The subject that worked in Mr. Willet's mind, and occasioned these demonstrations, was no other than his son's bodily disfigurement, which he had never yet got himself thoroughly to believe, or comprehend. Shortly after their first meeting, he had been observed to wander, in a state of great perplexity, to the kitchen, and to direct his gaze towards the fire, as if in search of his usual adviser in all matters of doubt and difficulty. But there being no boiler at the Black Lion, and the rioters having so beaten and battered his own that it was quite unfit for further service, he wandered out again, in a perfect bog of uncertainty and mental confusion, and in that state took the strangest means of resolving his doubts: such as feeling the sleeve of his son's great-coat as deeming it possible that his arm might be there; looking at his own arms and those of everybody else, as if to assure himself that two and not one was the usual allowance sitting by the hour together in a brown study, as if he were endeavoring to recall Joe's image in his younger days, and to remember whether he really had in those times one arm or a pair; and employing himself in many other speculations of the same kind.

Finding himself at this supper, surrounded by faces

with which he had been so well acquainted in old times, Mr. Willet recurred to the subject with uncommon vigor; apparently resolved to understand it now or never. Sometimes, after every two or three mouthfuls, he laid down his knife and fork, and stared at his son with all his might — particularly at his maimed side; then, he looked slowly round the table until he caught some person's eye, when he shook his head with great solemnity, patted his shoulder, winked, or as one may say — for winking was a very slow process with him — went to sleep with one eye for a minute or two; and so, with another solemn shaking of his head, took up his knife and fork again, and went on eating. Sometimes, he put his food into his mouth abstractedly, and, with all his faculties concentrated on Joe, gazed at him in a fit of stupefaction as he cut his meat with one hand, until he was recalled to himself by symptoms of choking on his own part, and was by that means restored to consciousness. At other times he resorted to such small devices as asking him for the salt, the pepper, the vinegar, the mustard — anything that was on his maimed side — and watching him as he handed it. By dint of these experiments, he did at last so satisfy and convince himself, that, after a longer silence than he had yet maintained, he laid down his knife and fork on either side his plate, drank a long draught from a tankard beside him (still keeping his eyes on Joe) and leaning backward in his chair and fetching a long breath, said, as he looked all round the board: —

“It's been took off!”

“By George!” said the Black Lion, striking the table with his hand, “he's got it!”

“Yes, sir,” said Mr. Willet, with the look of a man

who felt that he had earned a compliment, and deserved it. "That's where it is. It's been took off."

"Tell him where it was done," said the Black Lion to Joe.

"At the defence of the Savannah, father."

"At the defence of the Salwanners," repeated Mr Willet, softly; again looking round the table.

"In America, where the war is," said Joe.

"In America, where the war is," repeated Mr. Willet. "It was took off in the defence of the Salwanners in America where the war is." Continuing to repeat these words to himself in a low tone of voice (the same information had been conveyed to him in the same terms, at least fifty times before), Mr. Willet arose from table, walked round to Joe, felt his empty sleeve all the way up, from the cuff to where the stump of his arm remained; shook his hand; lighted his pipe at the fire, took a long whiff, walked to the door, turned round once when he had reached it, wiped his left eye with the back of his forefinger, and said, in a faltering voice: "My son's arm — was took off — at the defence of the — Salwanners — in America — where the war is" — with which words he withdrew, and returned no more that night.

Indeed, on various pretences, they all withdrew one after another, save Dolly, who was left sitting there alone. It was a great relief to be alone, and she was crying to her heart's content, when she heard Joe's voice at the end of the passage, bidding somebody good-night.

Good-night! Then he was going elsewhere — to some distance, perhaps. To what kind of home *could* he be going now that it was so late!

She heard him walk along the passage, and pass the

door. But there was a hesitation in his footsteps. He turned back — Dolly's heart beat high — he looked in.

"Good-night!" — he didn't say Dolly, but there was comfort in his not saying Miss Varden.

"Good-night!" sobbed Dolly.

"I am sorry you take on so much, for what is past and gone," said Joe kindly. "Don't. I can't bear to see you do it. Think of it no longer. You are safe and happy now."

Dolly cried the more.

"You must have suffered very much within these few days — and yet you're not changed, unless it's for the better. They said you were, but I don't see it. You were — you were always very beautiful," said Joe, "but you are more beautiful than ever, now. You are indeed. There can be no harm in my saying so, for you must know it. You are told so very often, I am sure."

As a general principle, Dolly *did* know it, and *was* told so, very often. But the coach-maker had turned out, years ago, to be a special donkey; and whether she had been afraid of making similar discoveries in others, or had grown by dint of long custom to be careless of compliments generally, certain it is that although she cried so much, she was better pleased to be told so now, than ever she had been in all her life.

"I shall bless your name," sobbed the locksmith's little daughter, "as long as I live. I shall never hear it spoken without feeling as if my heart would burst. I shall remember it in my prayers, every night and morning till I die!"

"Will you?" said Joe, eagerly. "Will you indeed? It makes me — well, it makes me very glad and proud to hear you say so."

Dolly still sobbed, and held her handkerchief to her eyes. Joe still stood looking at her.

"Your voice," said Joe, "brings up old times so pleasantly, that, for the moment, I feel as if that night — there can be no harm in talking of that night now — had come back, and nothing had happened in the mean time. I feel as if I hadn't suffered any hardships, but had knocked down poor Tom Cobb only yesterday, and had come to see you with my bundle on my shoulder before running away — You remember?"

Remember! But she said nothing. She raised her eyes for an instant. It was but a glance; a little, tearful, timid glance. It kept Joe silent though, for a long time.

"Well!" he said stoutly, "it was to be otherwise, and was. I have been abroad, fighting all the summer and frozen up all the winter, ever since. I have come back as poor in purse as I went, and crippled for life besides. But, Dolly, I would rather have lost this other arm — ay, I would rather have lost my head — than have come back to find you dead, or anything but what I always pictured you to myself, and what I always hoped and wished to find you. Thank God for all!"

Oh how much, and how keenly, the little coquette of five years ago, felt now! She had found her heart at last. Never having known its worth till now, she had never known the worth of his. How priceless it appeared!

"I did hope once," said Joe, in his homely way, "that I might come back a rich man, and marry you. But I was a boy then, and have long known better than that. I am a poor, maimed, discharged soldier, and must be content to rub through life as I can. I can't say, even

now, that I shall be glad to see you married, Dolly ; but I *am* glad — yes, I am, and glad to think I can say so — to know that you are admired and courted, and can pick and choose for a happy life. It's a comfort to me to know that you'll talk to your husband about me ; and I hope the time will come when I may be able to like him, and to shake hands with him, and to come and see you as a poor friend who knew you when you were a girl. God bless you ! ”

His hand *did* tremble ; but for all that, he took it away again, and left her

CHAPTER LXXIII.

By this Friday night — for it was on Friday in the riot week, that Emma and Dolly were rescued, by the timely aid of Joe and Edward Chester — the disturbances were entirely quelled, and peace and order were restored to the affrighted city. True, after what had happened, it was impossible for any man to say how long this better state of things might last, or how suddenly new outrages, exceeding even those so lately witnessed, might burst forth and fill its streets with ruin and bloodshed; for this reason, those who had fled from the recent tumults still kept at a distance, and many families, hitherto unable to procure the means of flight, now availed themselves of the calm, and withdrew into the country. The shops, too, from Tyburn to Whitechapel, were still shut; and very little business was transacted in any of the places of great commercial resort. But, notwithstanding, and in spite of the melancholy forebodings of that numerous class of society who see with the greatest clearness into the darkest perspectives, the town remained profoundly quiet. The strong military force disposed in every advantageous quarter, and stationed at every commanding point, held the scattered fragments of the mob in check; the search after rioters was prosecuted with unrelenting vigor; and if there were any among them so desperate and reckless as to be inclined, after the terrible scenes they had beheld,

to venture forth again, they were so daunted by these resolute measures, that they quickly shrunk into their hiding-places, and had no thought but for their personal safety.

In a word, the crowd was utterly routed. Upwards of two hundred had been shot dead in the streets. Two hundred and fifty more were lying, badly wounded, in the hospitals; of whom seventy or eighty died within a short time afterwards. A hundred were already in custody, and more were taken every hour. How many perished in the conflagrations, or by their own excesses, is unknown; but that numbers found a terrible grave in the hot ashes of the flames they had kindled, or crept into vaults and cellars to drink in secret or to nurse their sores, and never saw the light again, is certain. When the embers of the fires had been black, and cold for many weeks, the laborers' spades proved this, beyond a doubt.

Seventy-two private houses and four strong jails were destroyed in the four great days of these riots. The total loss of property, as estimated by the sufferers, was one hundred and fifty-five thousand pounds; at the lowest and least partial estimate of disinterested persons, it exceeded one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds. For this immense loss, compensation was soon afterwards made out of the public purse, in pursuance of a vote of the House of Commons; the sum being levied on the various wards in the city, on the county, and the borough of Southwark. Both Lord Mansfield and Lord Saville, however, who had been great sufferers, refused to accept of any compensation whatever.

The House of Commons, sitting on Tuesday with locked and guarded doors, had passed a resolution to

the effect that, as soon as the tumults subsided, it would immediately proceed to consider the petitions presented from many of his majesty's Protestant subjects, and would take the same into its serious consideration. While this question was under debate, Mr. Herbert, one of the members present, indignantly rose and called upon the House to observe that Lord George Gordon was then sitting under the gallery with the blue cockade, the signal of rebellion, in his hat. He was not only obliged, by those who sat near, to take it out; but offering to go into the street to pacify the mob with the somewhat indefinite assurance that the House was prepared to give them "the satisfaction they sought," was actually held down in his seat by the combined force of several members. In short, the disorder and violence which reigned triumphant out of doors, penetrated into the senate, and there, as elsewhere, terror and alarm prevailed, and ordinary forms were for the time forgotten.

On the Thursday, both Houses had adjourned until the following Monday se'nnight, declaring it impossible to pursue their deliberations with the necessary gravity and freedom, while they were surrounded by armed troops. And now that the rioters were dispersed, the citizens were beset with a new fear; for, finding the public thoroughfares and all their usual places of resort filled with soldiers intrusted with the free use of fire and sword, they began to lend a greedy ear to the rumors which were afloat of martial law being declared, and to dismal stories of prisoners having been seen hanging on lamp-posts in Cheapside and Fleet-street. These terrors being promptly dispelled by a Proclamation declaring that all the rioters in custody would be tried by

A special commission in due course of law, a fresh alarm was engendered by its being whispered abroad that French money had been found on some of the rioters, and that the disturbances had been fomented by foreign powers who sought to compass the overthrow and ruin of England. This report, which was strengthened by the diffusion of anonymous hand-bills, but which, if it had any foundation at all, probably owed its origin to the circumstance of some few coins which were not English money having been swept into the pockets of the insurgents with other miscellaneous booty, and afterwards discovered on the prisoners or the dead bodies, — caused a great sensation; and men's minds being in that excited state when they are most apt to catch at any shadow of apprehension, was bruited about with much industry.

All remaining quiet, however, during the whole of this Friday, and on this Friday night, and no new discoveries being made, confidence began to be restored, and the most timid and desponding breathed again. In Southwark, no fewer than three thousand of the inhabitants formed themselves into a watch, and patrolled the streets every hour. Nor were the citizens slow to follow so good an example: and it being the manner of peaceful men to be very bold when the danger is over, they were abundantly fierce and daring; not scrupling to question the stoutest passenger with great severity, and carrying it with a very high hand over all errand-boys, servant-girls, and 'prentices.

As day deepened into evening, and darkness crept into the nooks and corners of the town as if it were mustering in secret and gathering strength to venture into the open ways, Barnaby sat in his dungeon, won-

dering at the silence, and listening in vain for the noise and outcry which had ushered in the night of late. Beside him, with his hand in hers, sat one in whose companionship he felt at peace. She was worn and altered, full of grief, and heavy-hearted; but the same to him.

"Mother," he said, after a long silence: "how long, — how many days and nights, — shall I be kept here?"

"Not many, dear. I hope not many."

"You hope! Ay, but your hoping will not undo these chains. I hope, but they don't mind that. Grip hopes, but who cares for Grip?"

The raven gave a short, dull, melancholy croak. It said "Nobody," as plainly as a croak could speak.

"Who cares for Grip, excepting you and me?" said Barnaby, smoothing the bird's rumpled feathers with his hand. "He never speaks in this place; he never says a word in jail; he sits and mopes all day in this dark corner, dozing sometimes, and sometimes looking at the light that creeps in through the bars, and shines in his bright eye as if a spark from those great fires had fallen into the room and was burning yet. But who cares for Grip?"

The raven croaked again — Nobody.

"And by the way," said Barnaby, withdrawing his hand from the bird, and laying it upon his mother's arm, as he looked eagerly in her face; "if they kill me — they may: I heard it said they would — what will become of Grip when I am dead?"

The sound of the word, or the current of his own thoughts, suggested to Grip his old phrase "Never say die!" But he stopped short in the middle of it, drew a dismal cork, and subsided into a faint croak,

as if he lacked the heart to get through the shortest sentence.

"Will they take *his* life as well as mine?" said Barnaby. "I wish they would. If you and I and he could die together, there would be none to feel sorry, or to grieve for us. But do what they will, I don't fear them, mother!"

"They will not harm you," she said, her tears choking her utterance. "They never will harm you, when they know all. I am sure they never will."

"Oh! Don't you be too sure of that," cried Barnaby, with a strange pleasure in the belief that she was self-deceived, and in his own sagacity. "They have marked me, mother, from the first. I heard them say so to each other when they brought me to this place last night; and I believe them. Don't you cry for me. They said that I was bold, and so I am, and so I will be. You may think that I am silly, but I can die as well as another. — I have done no harm, have I?" he added quickly.

"None before Heaven," she answered.

"Why then," said Barnaby, "let them do their worst. You told me once — you — when I asked you what death meant, that it was nothing to be feared, if we did no harm — Aha! mother, you thought I had forgotten that!"

His merry laugh and playful manner smote her to the heart. She drew him closer to her, and besought him to talk to her in whispers, and to be very quiet, for it was getting dark, and their time was short, and she would soon have to leave him for the night.

"You will come to-morrow?" said Barnaby.

Yes. And every day. And they would never part again.

He joyfully replied that this was well, and what he wished, and what he had felt quite certain she would tell him; and then he asked her where she had been so long, and why she had not come to see him when he was a great soldier, and ran through the wild schemes he had had for their being rich and living prosperously, and, with some faint notion in his mind that she was sad and he had made her so, tried to console and comfort her, and talked of their former life and his old sports and freedom: little dreaming that every word he uttered only increased her sorrow, and that her tears fell faster at the freshened recollection of their lost tranquillity.

"Mother," said Barnaby, as they heard the man approaching to close the cells for the night, "when I spoke to you just now about my father you cried 'Hush!' and turned away your head. Why did you do so? Tell me why, in a word. You thought *he* was dead. You are not sorry that he is alive and has come back to us. Where is he? Here?"

"Do not ask any one where he is, or speak about him," she made answer.

"Why not?" said Barnaby. "Because he is a stern man, and talks roughly? Well, I don't like him, or want to be with him by myself; but why not speak about him?"

"Because I am sorry that he is alive; sorry that he has come back; and sorry that he and you have ever met. Because, dear Barnaby, the endeavor of my life has been to keep you two asunder."

"Father and son asunder! Why?"

"He has," she whispered in his ear, "he has shed blood. The time has come when you must know it.

He has shed the blood of one who loved him well, and trusted him, and never did him wrong in word or deed."

Barnaby recoiled in horror, and glancing at his stained wrist for an instant, wrapped it, shuddering, in his dress.

"But," she added hastily as the key turned in the lock, "and although we shun him, he is your father, dearest, and I am his wretched wife. They seek his life, and he will lose it. It must not be by our means, nay, if we could win him back to penitence, we should be bound to love him yet. Do not seem to know him, except as one who fled with you from the jail, and if they question you about him, do not answer them. God be with you through the night, dear boy! God be with you!"

She tore herself away, and in a few seconds Barnaby was alone. He stood for a long time rooted to the spot, with his face hidden in his hands; then flung himself, sobbing, upon his miserable bed.

But the moon came slowly up in all her gentle glory, and the stars looked out, and through the small compass of the grated window, as through the narrow crevice of one good deed in a murky life of guilt, the face of Heaven shone bright and merciful. He raised his head; gazed upward at the quiet sky, which seemed to smile upon the earth in sadness, as if the night, more thoughtful than the day, looked down in sorrow on the sufferings and evil deeds of men; and felt its peace sink deep into his heart. He, a poor idiot, caged in his narrow cell, was as much lifted up to God, while gazing on the mild light, as the freest and most favored man in all the spacious city; and in his ill-remembered prayer, and in the fragment of the childish hymn, with which he sung

and crooned himself asleep, there breathed as true a spirit as every studied homily expressed, or old cathedral arches echoed.

As his mother crossed a yard on her way out, she saw, through a grated door which separated it from another court, her husband, walking round and round, with his hands folded on his breast, and his head hung down. She asked the man who conducted her, if she might speak a word with this prisoner. Yes, but she must be quick, for he was locking up for the night, and there was but a minute or so to spare. Saying this, he unlocked the door, and bade her go in.

It grated harshly as it turned upon its hinges, but he was deaf to the noise, and still walked round and round the little court, without raising his head or changing his attitude in the least. She spoke to him, but her voice was weak, and failed her. At length she put herself in his track, and when he came near, stretched out her hand and touched him.

He started backward, trembling from head to foot; but seeing who it was, demanded why she came there. Before she could reply, he spoke again.

"Am I to live or die? Do you do murder too, or spare?"

"My son—our son," she answered, "is in this prison."

"What is that to me?" he cried, stamping impatiently on the stone pavement. "I know it. He can no more aid me than I can aid him. If you are come to talk of him, begone!"

As he spoke he resumed his walk, and hurried round the court as before. When he came again to where she stood: he stopped, and said, —

"Am I to live or die? Do you repent?"

"Oh! — do *you*?" she answered. "Will you, while time remains? Do not believe that I could save you, if I dared."

"Say if you would," he answered with an oath as he tried to disengage himself and pass on. "Say if you would."

"Listen to me for one moment," she returned; "for but a moment. I am but newly risen from a sick-bed, from which I never hoped to rise again. The best among us think, at such a time, of good intentions half-performed and duties left undone. If I have ever, since that fatal night, omitted to pray for your repentance before death — if I omitted, even then, anything which might tend to urge it on you when the horror of your crime was fresh — if, in our later meeting, I yielded to the dread that was upon me, and forgot to fall upon my knees and solemnly adjure you, in the name of him you sent to his account with Heaven, to prepare for the retribution which must come, and which is stealing on you now — I humbly before you, and in the agony of supplication in which you see me, beseech that you will let me make atonement."

"What is the meaning of your canting words?" he answered roughly. "Speak so that I may understand you."

"I will," she answered, "I desire to. Bear with me for a moment more. The hand of Him who set his curse on murder, is heavy on us now. You cannot doubt it. Our son, our innocent boy, on whom His anger fell before his birth, is in this place in peril of his life — brought here by your guilt; yes, by that alone, as Heaven sees and knows, for he has been led astray in the darkness of his intellect, and that is the terrible consequence of your crime."

"If you come, woman-like, to load me with reproaches" — he muttered, again endeavoring to break away.

— "I do not. I have a different purpose. You must hear it. If not to-night, to-morrow; if not to-morrow, at another time. You *must* hear it. Husband, escape is hopeless — impossible."

"You tell me so, do you?" he said, raising his mangled hand, and shaking it. "You!"

"Yes," she said with indescribable earnestness. "But why?"

"To make me easy in this jail. To make the time 'twixt this and death, pass pleasantly. For my good — yes, for my good, of course," he said, grinding his teeth, and smiling at her with a livid face.

"Not to load you with reproaches," she replied; "not to aggravate the tortures and miseries of your condition not to give you one hard word, but to restore you to peace and hope. Husband, dear husband, if you will but confess this dreadful crime; if you will but implore forgiveness of Heaven and of those whom you have wronged on earth; if you will dismiss these vain uneasy thoughts, which never can be realized, and will rely on Penitence and on the Truth, I promise you, in the great name of the Creator, whose image you have defaced, that He will comfort and console you. And for myself," she cried, clasping her hands, and looking upward, "I swear before Him, as He knows my heart and reads it now, that from that hour I will love and cherish you as I did of old, and watch you night and day in the short interval that will remain to us, and soothe you with my truest love and duty, and pray with you, that one threatening judgment may be arrested, and

that our boy may be spared to bless God, in his poor way, in the free air and light!"

He fell back and gazed at her while she poured out these words, as though he were for a moment awed by her manner, and knew not what to do. But anger and fear soon got the mastery of him, and he spurned her from him.

"Begone!" he cried. "Leave me; You plot, do you! You plot to get speech with me, and let them know I am the man they say I am. A curse on you and on your boy."

"On him the curse has already fallen," she replied, wringing her hands.

"Let it fall heavier. Let it fall on one and all. I hate you both. The worst has come to me. The only comfort that I seek or I can have, will be the knowledge that it comes to you. Now go!"

She would have urged him gently, even then, but he menaced her with his chain.

"I say go—I say it for the last time. The gallows has me in its grasp, and it is a black phantom that may urge me on to something more. Begone! I curse the hour that I was born, the man I slew, and all the living world!"

In a paroxysm of wrath, and terror, and the fear of death, he broke from her, and rushed into the darkness of his cell, where he cast himself jangling down upon the stone floor, and smote it with his iron hands. The man returned to lock the dungeon-door, and having done so, carried her away.

On that warm, balmy night in June, there were glad faces and light hearts in all quarters of the town, and sleep, banished by the late horrors, was doubly welcomed.

On that night, families made merry in their houses, and greeted each other on the common danger they had escaped; and those who had been denounced, ventured into the streets; and they who had been plundered, got good shelter. Even the timorous Lord Mayor, who was summoned that night before the Privy Council to answer for his conduct, came back contented; observing to all his friends that he had got off very well with a reprimand, and repeating with huge satisfaction his memorable defence before the Council, "that such was his temerity, he thought death would have been his potion."

On that night, too, more of the scattered remnants of the mob were traced to their lurking-places, and taken; and in the hospitals, and deep among the ruins they had made, and in the ditches, and the fields, many unshrouded wretches lay dead: envied by those who had been active in the disturbances, and who pillowed their doomed heads in the temporary jails.

And in the Tower, in a dreary room whose thick stone walls shut out the hum of life, and made a stillness which the records left by former prisoners with those silent witnesses seemed to deepen and intensify; remorseful for every act that had been done by every man among the cruel crowd; feeling for the time their guilt his own, and their lives put in peril by himself; and finding, amidst such reflections, little comfort in fanaticism, or in his fancied call; sat the unhappy author of all --- Lord George Gordon.

He had been made prisoner that evening. "If you are sure it's me you want," he said to the officer, who waited outside with the warrant for his arrest on a charge of High Treason, "I am ready to accompany you" --- which he did without resistance. He was con-

ducted first before the Privy Council, and afterwards to the Horse Guards, and then was taken by way of Westminster Bridge, and back over London Bridge (for the purpose of avoiding the main streets), to the Tower, under the strongest guard ever known to enter its gates with a single prisoner.

Of all his forty thousand men, not one remained to bear him company. Friends, dependents, followers, — none were there. His fawning secretary had played the traitor; and he whose weakness had been goaded and urged on by so many for their own purposes, was desolate and alone.

CHAPTER LXXIV. •

MR. DENNIS, having been made prisoner late in the evening, was removed to a neighboring round-house for that night, and carried before a justice for examination on the next day, Saturday. The charges against him being numerous and weighty, and it being in particular proved, by the testimony of Gabriel Varden, that he had shown a special desire to take his life, he was committed for trial. Moreover he was honored with the distinction of being considered a chief among the insurgents, and received from the magistrate's lips the complimentary assurance that he was in a position of imminent danger, and would do well to prepare himself for the worst.

To say that Mr. Dennis's modesty was not somewhat startled by these honors, or that he was altogether prepared for so flattering a reception, would be to claim for him a greater amount of stoical philosophy than even he possessed. Indeed this gentleman's stoicism was of that not uncommon kind, which enables a man to bear with exemplary fortitude the afflictions of his friends, but renders him, by way of counterpoise, rather selfish and sensitive in respect of any that happen to befall himself. It is therefore no disparagement to the great officer in question to state, without disguise or concealment, that he was at first very much alarmed, and that he betrayed divers emotions of fear, until his reasoning powers came to his relief, and set before him a more hopeful prospect.

In proportion as Mr. Dennis exercised these intellectual qualities with which he was gifted, in reviewing his best chances of coming off handsomely and with small personal inconvenience, his spirits rose, and his confidence increased. When he remembered the great estimation in which his office was held, and the constant demand for his services; when he bethought himself, how the Statute Book regarded him as a kind of Universal Medicine applicable to men, women, and children, of every age and variety of criminal constitution; and how high he stood, in his official capacity, in the favor of the Crown, and both Houses of Parliament, the Mint, the Bank of England, and the Judges of the land; when he recollected that whatever ministry was in or out, he remained their peculiar pet and panacea, and that for his sake England stood single and conspicuous among the civilized nations of the earth: when he called these things to mind and dwelt upon them, he felt certain that the national gratitude *must* relieve him from the consequences of his late proceedings, and would certainly restore him to his old place in the happy social system.

With these crumbs, or as one may say, with these whole loaves of comfort to regale upon, Mr. Dennis took his place among the escort that awaited him, and repaired to jail with a manly indifference. Arriving at Newgate, where some of the ruined cells had been hastily fitted up for the safe-keeping of rioters, he was warmly received by the turnkeys, as an unusual and interesting case, which agreeably relieved their monotonous duties. In this spirit, he was fettered with great care, and conveyed into the interior of the prison.

"Brother," cried the hangman, as, following an officer,

he traversed under these novel circumstances the remains of passages with which he was well acquainted, "am I going to be along with anybody?"

"If you'd have left more walls standing, you'd have been alone," was the reply. "As it is, we're cramped for room, and you'll have company."

"Well," returned Dennis, "I don't object to company, brother. I rather like company. I was formed for society, I was."

"That's rather a pity, a'n't it?" said the man.

"No," answered Dennis, "I'm not aware that it is. Why should it be a pity, brother?"

"Oh! I don't know," said the man carelessly. "I thought that was what you meant. Being formed for society, and being cut off in your flower, you know"—

"I say," interposed the other quickly, "what are you talking of? Don't. Who's a-going to be cut off in their flowers?"

"Oh, nobody particular. I thought you was, perhaps," said the man.

Mr. Dennis wiped his face, which had suddenly grown very hot, and remarking in a tremulous voice to his conductor that he had always been fond of his joke, followed him in silence until he stopped at a door.

"This is my quarters, is it?" he asked facetiously.

"This is the shop, sir," replied his friend.

He was walking in, but not with the best possible grace, when he suddenly stopped, and started back.

"Halloa!" said the officer. "You're nervous."

"Nervous!" whispered Dennis in great alarm. "Well I may be. Shut the door."

"I will, when you're in," returned the man.

"But I can't go in there," whispered Dennis. "I

can't be shut up with that man. Do you want me to be throttled, brother?"

The officer seemed to entertain no particular desire on the subject one way or other, but briefly remarking that he had his orders, and intended to obey them, pushed him in, turned the key, and retired.

Dennis stood trembling with his back against the door, and involuntarily raising his arm to defend himself, stared at a man, the only other tenant of the cell, who lay, stretched at his full length, upon a stone bench, and who paused in his deep breathing as if he were about to wake. But he rolled over on one side, let his arm fall negligently down, drew a long sigh, and murmuring indistinctly, fell fast asleep again.

Relieved in some degree by this, the hangman took his eyes for an instant from the slumbering figure, and glanced round the cell in search of some 'vantage-ground or weapon of defence. There was nothing movable within it, but a clumsy table which could not be displaced without noise, and a heavy chair. Stealing on tiptoe towards this latter piece of furniture, he retired with it into the remotest corner, and intrenching himself behind it, watched the enemy with the utmost vigilance and caution.

The sleeping man was Hugh; and perhaps it was not unnatural for Dennis to feel in a state of very uncomfortable suspense, and to wish with his whole soul that he might never wake again. Tired of standing, he crouched down in his corner after some time, and rested on the cold pavement; but although Hugh's breathing still proclaimed that he was sleeping soundly, he could not trust him out of his sight for an instant. He was so afraid of him, and of some sudden onslaught, that he was

not content to see his closed eyes through the chair-back, but every now and then, rose stealthily to his feet, and peered at him with outstretched neck, to assure himself that he really was still asleep, and was not about to spring upon him when he was off his guard.

He slept so long and so soundly, that Mr. Dennis began to think he might sleep on until the turnkey visited them. He was congratulating himself upon these promising appearances, and blessing his stars with much fervor, when one or two unpleasant symptoms manifested themselves: such as another motion of the arm, another sigh, a restless tossing of the head. Then, just as it seemed that he was about to fall heavily to the ground from his narrow bed, Hugh's eyes opened.

It happened that his face was turned directly towards his unexpected visitor. He looked lazily at him for some half-dozen seconds without any aspect of surprise or recognition; then suddenly jumped up, and with a great oath pronounced his name.

"Keep off, brother, keep off!" cried Dennis, dodging behind the chair. "Don't do me a mischief. I'm a prisoner like you. I haven't the free use of my limbs. I'm quite an old man. Don't hurt me!"

He whined out the last three words in such piteous accents, that Hugh, who had dragged away the chair, and aimed a blow at him with it, checked himself, and bade him get up.

"I'll get up certainly, brother," cried Dennis, anxious to propitiate him by any means in his power, "I'll comply with any request of yours, I'm sure. There — I'm up now. What can I do for you? Only say the word, and I'll do it."

"What can you do for me!" cried Hugh, clutching

him by the collar with both hands, and shaking him as though he were bent on stopping his breath by that means. "What have you done for me?"

"The best. The best that could be done," returned the hangman.

Hugh made him no answer, but shaking him in his strong gripe until his teeth chattered in his head, cast him down upon the floor, and flung himself on the bench again.

"If it wasn't for the comfort it is to me, to see you here," he muttered, "I'd have crushed your head against it; I would."

It was some time before Dennis had breath enough to speak, but as soon as he could resume his propitiatory strain, he did so.

"I did the best that could be done, brother," he whined; "I did indeed. I was forced with two bayonets and I don't know how many bullets on each side of me, to point you out. If you hadn't been taken, you'd have been shot; and what a sight that would have been—a fine young man like you!"

"Will it be a better sight now?" asked Hugh, raising his head, with such a fierce expression, that the other durst not answer him just then.

"A deal better," said Dennis meekly, after a pause. "First, there's all the chances of the law, and they're five hundred strong. We may get off scot-free. Unlikelier things than that, have come to pass. Even if we shouldn't, and the chances fail, we can but be worked off once: and when it's well done, it's so neat, so skilful, so raptiwating, if that don't seem too strong a word, that you'd hardly believe it could be brought to sich perfection. Kill one's fellow-creeturs off, with muskets!—

Pah!" and his nature so revolted at the bare idea, that he spat upon the dungeon pavement.

His warming on this topic, which to one unacquainted with his pursuits and tastes appeared like courage; together with his artful suppression of his own secret hopes, and mention of himself as being in the same condition with Hugh; did more to soothe that ruffian than the most elaborate arguments could have done, or the most abject submission. He rested his arms upon his knees, and stooping forward, looked from beneath his shaggy hair at Dennis, with something of a smile upon his face.

"The fact is, brother," said the hangman, in a tone of greater confidence, "that you got into bad company. The man that was with you was looked after more than you, and it was him I wanted. As to me, what have I got by it? Here we are, in one and the same plight."

"Lookee, rascal," said Hugh, contracting his brows, "I'm not altogether such a shallow blade but I know you expected to get something by it, or you wouldn't have done it. But it's done, and you're here, and it will soon be all over with you and me; and I'd as soon die as live, or live as die. Why should I trouble myself to have revenge on you? To eat, and drink, and go to sleep, as long as I stay here, is all I care for. If there was but a little more sun to bask in, than can find its way into this cursed place, I'd lie in it all day, and not trouble myself to sit or stand up once. That's all the care I have for myself. Why should I care for *you*!"

Finishing this speech with a growl like the yawn of a wild beast, he stretched himself upon the bench again, and closed his eyes once more.

After looking at him in silence for some moments,

Dennis, who was greatly relieved to find him in this mood, drew the chair towards his rough couch and sat down near him — taking the precaution, however, to keep out of the range of his brawny arm.

“Well said, brother; nothing could be better said,” he ventured to observe. “We’ll eat and drink of the best, and sleep our best, and make the best of it every way. Anything can be got for money. Let’s spend it merrily.”

“Ay,” said Hugh, coiling himself into a new position. — “Where is it?”

“Why, they took mine from me at the lodge,” said Mr. Dennis; “but mine’s a peculiar case.”

“Is it? They took mine too.”

“Why then, I tell you what, brother,” Dennis began. “You must look up your friends” —

“My friends!” cried Hugh, starting up and resting on his hands. “Where are my friends?”

“Your relations then,” said Dennis.

“Ha, ha, ha!” laughed Hugh, waving one arm above his head. “He talks of friends to me — talks of relations to a man whose mother died the death in store for her son, and left him, a hungry brat, without a face he knew in all the world! He talks of this to me!”

“Brother,” cried the hangman, whose features underwent a sudden change, “you don’t mean to say” —

“I mean to say,” Hugh interposed, “that they hung her up at Tyburn. What was good enough for her, is good enough for me. Let them do the like by me as soon as they please — the sooner the better. Say no more to me. I’m going to sleep.”

“But I want to speak to you; I want to hear more about that,” said Dennis, changing color.

"If you're a wise man," growled Hugh, raising his head to look at him with a frown, "you'll hold your tongue. I tell you I'm going to sleep."

Dennis venturing to say something more in spite of this caution, the desperate fellow struck at him with all his force, and missing him, lay down again with many muttered oaths and imprecations, and turned his face towards the wall. After two or three ineffectual twitches at his dress, which he was hardy enough to venture upon, notwithstanding his dangerous humor, Mr. Dennis, who burnt, for reasons of his own, to pursue the conversation, had no alternative but to sit as patiently as he could waiting his further pleasure.

CHAPTER LXXV.

A MONTH has elapsed, — and we stand in the bed-chamber of Sir John Chester. Through the half-opened window, the Temple Garden looks green and pleasant; the placid river, gay with boat and barge, and dimpled with the plash of many an oar, sparkles in the distance; the sky is blue and clear; and the summer air steals gently in, filling the room with perfume. The very town, the smoky town, is radiant. High roofs and steeple tops, wont to look black and sullen, smile a cheerful gray; every old gilded vane, and ball, and cross, glitters anew in the bright morning sun; and, high among them all, St. Paul's towers up, showing its lofty crest in burnished gold.

Sir John was breakfasting in bed. His chocolate and toast stood upon a little table at his elbow; books and newspapers lay ready to his hand upon the coverlet; and, sometimes pausing to glance with an air of tranquil satisfaction round the well-ordered room, and sometimes to gaze indolently at the summer sky, he ate, and drank, and read the news luxuriously.

The cheerful influence of the morning seemed to have some effect, even upon his equable temper. His manner was unusually gay; his smile more placid and agreeable than usual; his voice more clear and pleasant. He laid down the newspaper he had been reading; leaned back upon his pillow with the air of one who resigned himself

to a train of charming recollections ; and after a pause, soliloquized as follows :—

“ And my friend the centaur, goes the way of his mama ! I am not surprised. And his mysterious friend Mr. Dennis, likewise ! I am not surprised. And my old postman, the exceedingly free and easy young madman of Chigwell ! I am quite rejoiced. It’s the very best thing that could possibly happen to him.”

After delivering himself of these remarks, he fell again into his smiling train of reflection ; from which he roused himself at length to finish his chocolate, which was getting cold, and ring the bell for more.

The new supply arriving, he took the cup from his servant’s hand ; and saying, with a charming affability, “ I am obliged to you, Peak,” dismissed him.

“ It is a remarkable circumstance,” he mused, dallying lazily with the teaspoon, “ that my friend the madman should have been within an ace of escaping, on his trial ; and it was a good stroke of chance (or, as the world would say, a providential occurrence) that the brother of my Lord Mayor should have been in court, with other country justices, into whose very dense heads curiosity had penetrated. For though the brother of my Lord Mayor was decidedly wrong ; and established his near relationship to that amusing person beyond all doubt, in stating that my friend was sane, and had, to his knowledge, wandered about the country with a vagabond parent, avowing revolutionary and rebellious sentiments ; I am not the less obliged to him for volunteering that evidence. These insane creatures make such very odd and embarrassing remarks, that they really ought to be hanged for the comfort of society.”

The country justice had indeed turned the wavering

scale against poor Barnaby, and solved the doubt that trembled in his favor. Grip little thought how much he had to answer for.

"They will be a singular party," said Sir John, leaning his head upon his hand, and sipping his chocolate; "a very curious party. The hangman himself; the centaur; and the madman. The centaur would make a very handsome preparation in Surgeons' Hall, and would benefit science extremely. I hope they have taken care to bespeak him. — Peak, I am not at home, of course, to anybody but the hair-dresser."

This reminder to his servant was called forth by a knock at the door, which the man hastened to open. After a prolonged murmur of question and answer, he returned; and as he cautiously closed the room-door behind him, a man was heard to cough in the passage.

"Now, it is of no use Peak," said Sir John, raising his hand in deprecation of his delivering any message; "I am not at home. I cannot possibly hear you. I told you I was not at home, and my word is sacred. Will you never do as you are desired?"

Having nothing to oppose to this reproof, the man was about to withdraw, when the visitor who had given occasion to it, probably rendered impatient by delay, knocked with his knuckles at the chamber-door, and called out that he had urgent business with Sir John Chester, which admitted of no delay.

"Let him in," said Sir John. "My good fellow," he added, when the door was opened, "how come you to intrude yourself in this extraordinary manner upon the privacy of a gentleman? How can you be so wholly destitute of self-respect as to be guilty of such remarkable ill-breeding?"

"My business, Sir John, is not of a common kind, I do assure you," returned the person he addressed. "If I have taken any uncommon course to get admission to you, I hope I shall be pardoned on that account."

"Well! we shall see; we shall see;" returned Sir John, whose face cleared up when he saw who it was, and whose prepossessing smile was now restored. "I am sure we have met before," he added in his winning tone, "but really I forget your name?"

"My name is Gabriel Varden, sir."

"Varden, of course, Varden," returned Sir John, tapping his forehead. "Dear me, how very defective my memory becomes! Varden to be sure — Mr. Varden the locksmith. You have a charming wife, Mr. Varden, and a most beautiful daughter. They are well?"

Gabriel thanked him, and said they were.

"I rejoice to hear it," said Sir John. "Commend me to them when you return, and say that I wished I were fortunate enough to convey, myself, the salute which I intrust you to deliver. And what," he asked very sweetly, after a moment's pause, "can I do for you? You may command me, freely."

"I thank you, Sir John," said Gabriel, with some pride in his manner, "but I have come to ask no favor of you, though I come on business. — Private," he added, with a glance at the man, who stood looking on, "and very pressing business."

"I cannot say you are the more welcome for being independent, and having nothing to ask of me," returned Sir John, graciously, "for I should have been happy to render you a service; still, you are welcome on any terms. Oblige me with some more chocolate, Peak, and don't wait."

The man retired, and left them alone.

"Sir John," said Gabriel, "I am a working-man, and have been so, all my life. If I don't prepare you enough for what I have to tell; if I come to the point too abruptly; and give you a shock, which a gentleman could have spared you, or at all events lessened very much; I hope you will give me credit for meaning well. I wish to be careful and considerate, and I trust that in a straightforward person like me, you'll take the will for the deed."

"Mr. Varden," returned the other, perfectly composed under this exordium; "I beg you'll take a chair. Chocolate, perhaps, you don't relish? Well! it is an acquired taste, no doubt."

"Sir John," said Gabriel, who had acknowledged with a bow the invitation to be seated, but had not availed himself of it: "Sir John" — he dropped his voice and drew nearer to the bed — "I am just now come from Newgate" —

"Good Gad!" cried Sir John, hastily sitting up in bed; "from Newgate, Mr. Varden! How could you be so very imprudent as to come from Newgate! Newgate where there are jail-fevers, and ragged people, and bare footed men and women, and a thousand horrors! Peak bring the camphor, quick! Heaven and earth, Mr. Varden, my dear, good soul, how *could* you come from Newgate?"

Gabriel returned no answer, but looked on in silence while Peak (who had entered opportunely with the hot chocolate) ran to a drawer, and returning with a bottle, sprinkled his master's dressing-gown and the bedding; and besides moistening the locksmith himself, plentifully, described a circle round about him on the carpet. When

he had done this, he again retired ; and Sir John, reclining in an easy attitude upon his pillow, once more turned a smiling face towards his visitor.

“ You will forgive me, Mr. Varden, I am sure, for being at first a little sensitive both on your account and my own. I confess I was startled, notwithstanding your delicate exordium. Might I ask you to do me the favor not to approach any nearer ? — You have really come from Newgate ! ”

The locksmith inclined his head.

“ In-deed ! And now, Mr. Varden, all exaggeration and embellishment apart,” said Sir John Chester, confidentially, as he sipped his chocolate, “ what kind of place is Newgate ? ”

“ A strange place, Sir John,” returned the locksmith, “ of a sad and doleful kind. A strange place, where many strange things are heard and seen ; but few more strange than that I come to tell you of. The case is urgent. I am sent here.”

“ Not — no, no — not from the jail ? ”

“ Yes, Sir John ; from the jail.”

“ And my good, credulous, open-hearted friend,” said Sir John, setting down his cup, and laughing, — “ by whom ? ”

“ By a man called Dennis — for many years the hang-man, and to-morrow morning the hanged,” returned the locksmith.

Sir John had expected — had been quite certain from the first — that he would say he had come from Hugh, and was prepared to meet him on that point. But this answer occasioned him a degree of astonishment, which, for the moment, he could not, with all his command of feature, prevent his face from expressing. He

quickly subdued it, however, and said in the same light tone :

"And what does the gentleman require of me? My memory may be at fault again, but I don't recollect that I ever had the pleasure of an introduction to him, or that I ever numbered him among my personal friends, I do assure you, Mr. Varden."

"Sir John," returned the locksmith, gravely, "I will tell you, as nearly as I can, in the words he used to me, what he desires that you should know, and what you ought to know without a moment's loss of time."

Sir John Chester settled himself in a position of greater repose, and looked at his visitor with an expression of face which seemed to say, "This is an amusing fellow! I'll hear him out."

"You may have seen in the newspapers, sir," said Gabriel, pointing to the one which lay by his side, "that I was a witness against this man upon his trial some days since; and that it was not his fault I was alive, and able to speak to what I knew."

"*May* have seen!" cried Sir John. "My dear Mr. Varden, you are quite a public character, and live in all men's thoughts most deservedly. Nothing can exceed the interest with which I read your testimony, and remembered that I had the pleasure of a slight acquaintance with you.—I hope we shall have your portrait published?"

"This morning, sir," said the locksmith, taking no notice of these compliments, "early this morning, a message was brought to me from Newgate, at this man's request, desiring that I would go and see him, for he had something particular to communicate. I needn't tell you

that he is no friend of mine, and that I had never seen him, until the rioters beset my house."

Sir John fanned himself gently with the newspaper, and nodded.

"I knew, however, from the general report," resumed Gabriel, "that the order for his execution to-morrow, went down to the prison last night; and looking upon him as a dying man, I complied with his request."

"You are quite a Christian, Mr. Varden," said Sir John; "and in that amiable capacity, you increase my desire that you should take a chair."

"He said," continued Gabriel, looking steadily at the knight, "that he had sent to me, because he had no friend or companion in the whole world (being the common hangman), and because he believed, from the way in which I had given my evidence, that I was an honest man, and would act truly by him. He said that, being shunned by every one who knew his calling, even by people of the lowest and most wretched grade, and finding, when he joined the rioters, that the men he acted with had no suspicion of it (which I believe is true enough, for a poor fool of an old 'prentice of mine was one of them) he had kept his own counsel, up to the time of his being taken and put in jail."

"Very discreet of Mr. Dennis," observed Sir John with a slight yawn, though still with the utmost affability, "but — except for your admirable and lucid manner of telling it, which is perfect — not very interesting to me."

"When," pursued the locksmith, quite unabashed and wholly regardless of these interruptions, "when he was taken to the jail, he found that his fellow-prisoner, in the same room, was a young man, Hugh by name, a leader

in the riots, who had been betrayed and given up by himself. From something which fell from this unhappy creature in the course of the angry words they had at meeting, he discovered that his mother had suffered the death to which they both are now condemned. — The time is very short, Sir John."

The knight laid down his paper fan, replaced his cup upon the table at his side, and, saving for the smile that lurked about his mouth, looked at the locksmith with as much steadiness as the locksmith looked at him.

"They have been in prison now, a month. One conversation led to many more; and the hangman soon found, from a comparison of time, and place, and dates, that he had executed the sentence of the law upon this woman, himself. She had been tempted by want — as so many people are — into the easy crime of passing forged notes. She was young and handsome; and the traders who employ men, women, and children in this traffic, looked upon her as one who was well adapted for their business, and who would probably go on without suspicion for a long time. But they were mistaken; for she was stopped in the commission of her very first offence, and died for it. She was of gypsy blood, Sir John" —

It might have been the effect of a passing cloud which obscured the sun, and cast a shadow on his face; but the knight turned deadly pale. Still he met the locksmith's eye, as before.

"She was of gypsy blood, Sir John," repeated Gabriel, "and had a high, free spirit. This, and her good looks, and her lofty manner, interested some gentlemen who were easily moved by dark eyes; and efforts were made to save her. They might have been successful, if she

would have given them any clew to her history. But she never would, or did. There was reason to suspect that she would make an attempt upon her life. A watch was set upon her night and day; and from that time she never spoke again" —

Sir John stretched out his hand towards his cup. The locksmith going on, arrested it half-way.

— "Until she had but a minute to live. Then she broke silence, and said, in a low firm voice which no one heard but this executioner, for all other living creatures had retired and left her to her fate, 'If I had a dagger within these fingers and he was within my reach, I would strike him dead before me, even now!' The man asked 'Who?' She said, The father of her boy."

Sir John drew back his outstretched hand, and seeing that the locksmith paused, signed to him with easy politeness and without any new appearance of emotion, to proceed.

"It was the first word she had ever spoken, from which it could be understood that she had any relative on earth. 'Was the child alive?' he asked. 'Yes.' He asked her where it was, its name, and whether she had any wish respecting it. She had but one, she said. It was that the boy might live and grow, in utter ignorance of his father, so that no arts might teach him to be gentle and forgiving. When he became a man, she trusted to the God of their tribe to bring the father and the son together, and revenge her through her child. He asked her other questions, but she spoke no more. Indeed, he says she scarcely said this much, to him, but stood with her face turned upwards to the sky, and never looked towards him once."

Sir John took a pinch of snuff; glanced approvingly at an elegant little sketch, entitled "Nature," on the wall; and raising his eyes to the locksmith's face again, said, with an air of courtesy and patronage, "You were observing, Mr. Varden" —

"That she never," returned the locksmith, who was not to be diverted by any artifice from his firm manner, and his steady gaze, "that she never looked towards him once, Sir John; and so she died, and he forgot her. But, some years afterwards a man was sentenced to die the same death, who was a gypsy too; a sunburnt, swarthy fellow, almost a wild man; and while he lay in prison, under sentence, he, who had seen the hangman more than once while he was free, cut an image of him on his stick, by way of braving death, and showing those who attended on him, how little he cared or thought about it. He gave this stick into his hands at Tyburn, and told him then, that the woman I have spoken of had left her own people to join a fine gentleman, and that, being deserted by him, and cast off by her old friends, she had sworn within her own proud breast, that whatever her misery might be, she would ask no help of any human being. He told him that she had kept her word to the last; and that, meeting even him in the streets — he had been fond of her once, it seems — she had slipped from him by a trick, and he never saw her again, until, being in one of the frequent crowds at Tyburn, with some of his rough companions, he had been driven almost mad by seeing, in the criminal under another name, whose death he had come to witness, herself. Standing in the same place in which she had stood, he told the hangman this, and told him, too, her real name, which only her own people and the gentleman for whose sake

she had left them, knew. — That name he will tell again, Sir John, to none but you."

"To none but me!" exclaimed the knight, pausing in the act of raising his cup to his lips with a perfectly steady hand, and curling up his little finger for the better display of a brilliant ring with which it was ornamented: "but me! — My dear Mr. Varden, how very preposterous, to select me for his confidence! With you at his elbow, too, who are so perfectly trustworthy!"

"Sir John, Sir John," returned the locksmith, "at twelve to-morrow, these men die. Hear the few words I have to add, and do not hope to deceive me; for though I am a plain man of humble station, and you are a gentleman of rank and learning, the truth raises me to your level, and I KNOW that you anticipate the disclosure with which I am about to end, and that you believe this doomed man, Hugh, to be your son."

"Nay," said Sir John, bantering him with a gay air; "the wild gentleman, who died so suddenly, scarcely went as far as that, I think?"

"He did not," returned the locksmith, "for she had bound him by some pledge, known only to these people, and which the worst among them respect, not to tell your name: but, in a fantastic pattern on the stick, he had carved some letters, and when the hangman asked it, he bade him, especially if he should ever meet with her son in after life, remember that place well."

"What place?"

"Chester."

The knight finished his cup of chocolate with an appearance of infinite relish, and carefully wiped his lips upon his handkerchief.

"Sir John," said the locksmith, "this is all that has

been told to me; but since these two men have been left for death, they have conferred together, closely. See them, and hear what they can add. See this Dennis, and learn from him what he has not trusted to me. If you, who hold the clew to all, want corroboration (which you do not), the means are easy."

"And to what," said Sir John Chester, rising on his elbow, after smoothing the pillow for its reception; "my dear, good-natured, estimable Mr. Varden — with whom I cannot be angry if I would — to what does all this tend?"

"I take you for a man, Sir John, and I suppose it tends to some pleading of natural affection in your breast," returned the locksmith. "I suppose to the straining of every nerve and the exertion of all the influence you have, or can make, in behalf of your miserable son, and the man who has disclosed his existence to you. At the worst, I suppose to your seeing your son, and awakening him to a sense of his crime and danger. He has no such sense now. Think what his life must have been, when he said in my hearing, that if I moved you to anything, it would be to hastening his death, and ensuring his silence, if you had it in your power!"

"And have you, my good Mr. Varden," said Sir John in a tone of mild reproof, "have you really lived to your present age, and remained so very simple and credulous, as to approach a gentleman of established character with such credentials as these, from desperate men in their last extremity, catching at any straw? Oh dear! Oh fie, fie!"

The locksmith was going to interpose, but he stopped him: —

"On any other subject, Mr. Varden, I shall be de-

lighted — I shall be charmed — to converse with you but I owe it to my own character not to pursue this topic for another moment.”

“Think better of it, sir, when I am gone,” returned the locksmith; “think better of it, sir. Although you have, thrice within as many weeks, turned your lawful son, Mr. Edward, from your door, you may have time, you may have years to make your peace with *him*, Sir John: but that twelve o’clock will soon be here, and soon be past forever.”

“I thank you very much,” returned the knight, kissing his delicate hand to the locksmith, “for your guileless advice; and I only wish, my good soul, although your simplicity is quite captivating, that you had a little more worldly wisdom. I never so much regretted the arrival of my hair-dresser as I do at this moment. God bless you! Good-morning! You’ll not forget my message to the ladies, Mr. Varden? Peak, show Mr. Varden to the door.”

Gabriel said no more, but gave the knight a parting look, and left him. As he quitted the room, Sir John’s face changed; and the smile gave place to a haggard and anxious expression, like that of a weary actor jaded by the performance of a difficult part. He rose from his bed with a heavy sigh, and wrapped himself in his morning-gown.

“So, she kept her word,” he said, “and was constant to her threat! I would I had never seen that dark face of hers, — I might have read these consequences in it, from the first. This affair would make a noise abroad, if it rested on better evidence; but, as it is, and by not joining the scattered links of the chain, I can afford to slight it. — Extremely distressing to be the parent of

such an uncouth creature ! Still, I gave him very good advice. I told him he would certainly be hanged. I could have done no more if I had known of our relationship ; and there are a great many fathers who have never done as much for *their* natural children. — The hair-dresser may come in, Peak ! ”

The hair-dresser came in ; and saw in Sir John Chester (whose accommodating conscience was soon quieted by the numerous precedents that occurred to him in support of his last observation), the same imperturbable, fascinating, elegant gentleman he had seen yesterday, and many yesterdays before.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

As the locksmith walked slowly away from Sir John Chester's chambers, he lingered under the trees which shaded the path, almost hoping that he might be summoned to return. He had turned back thrice, and still loitered at the corner, when the clock struck twelve.

It was a solemn sound, and not merely for its reference to to-morrow; for he knew that in that chime the murderer's knell was rung. He had seen him pass along the crowded street, amidst the execrations of the throng; had marked his quivering lip, and trembling limbs; the ashy hue upon his face, his clammy brow, the wild distraction of his eye, — the fear of death that swallowed up all other thoughts, and gnawed without cessation at his heart and brain. He had marked the wandering look, seeking for hope, and finding, turn where it would, despair. He had seen the remorseful, pitiful, desolate creature, riding, with his coffin by his side, to the gibbet. He knew that, to the last, he had been an unyielding, obdurate man; that in the savage terror of his condition he had hardened, rather than relented, to his wife and child; and that the last words which had passed his white lips were curses on them as his enemies.

Mr. Haredale had determined to be there and see it done. Nothing but the evidence of his own senses could satisfy that gloomy thirst for retribution which had

been gathering upon him for so many years. The locksmith knew this, and when the chimes had ceased to vibrate, hurried away to meet him.

"For these two men," he said, as he went, "I can do no more. Heaven have mercy on them! — Alas! I say I can do no more for them, but whom *can* I help? Mary Rudge will have a home, and a firm friend when she most wants one; but Barnaby — poor Barnaby — willing Barnaby — what aid can I render him? There are many, many men of sense, God forgive me," cried the honest locksmith, stopping in a narrow court to pass his hand across his eyes, "I could better afford to lose than Barnaby. We have always been good friends, but I never knew, till now, how much I loved the lad."

There were not many in the great city who thought of Barnaby that day, otherwise than as an actor in a show which was to take place to-morrow. But, if the whole population had had him in their minds, and had wished his life to be spared, not one among them could have done so with a purer zeal or greater singleness of heart than the good locksmith.

Barnaby was to die. There was no hope. It is not the least evil attendant upon the frequent exhibition of this last dread punishment, of Death, that it hardens the minds of those who deal it out, and makes them, though they be amiable men in other respects, indifferent to, or unconscious of, their great responsibility. The word had gone forth that Barnaby was to die. It went forth, every month, for lighter crimes. It was a thing so common, that very few were startled by the awful sentence, or cared to question its propriety. Just then, too, when the law had been so flagrantly outraged, its dignity must be

asserted. The symbol of its dignity, — stamped upon every page of the criminal statute-book, — was the gallows ; and Barnaby was to die.

They had tried to save him. The locksmith had carried petitions and memorials to the fountain-head, with his own hands. But the well was not one of mercy, and Barnaby was to die.

From the first, his mother had never left him, save at night ; and with her beside him, he was as usual contented. On this last day, he was more elated and more proud than he had been yet ; and when she dropped the book she had been reading to him aloud, and fell upon his neck, he stopped in his busy task of folding a piece of crape about his hat, and wondered at her anguish. Grip uttered a feeble croak, half in encouragement, it seemed, and half in remonstrance, but he wanted heart to sustain it, and lapsed abruptly into silence.

With them, who stood upon the brink of the great gulph which none can see beyond, Time, so soon to lose itself in vast Eternity, rolled on like a mighty river, swoln and rapid as it nears the sea. It was morning but now ; they had sat and talked together in a dream ; and here was evening. The dreadful hour of separation, which even yesterday had seemed so distant, was at hand.

They walked out into the court-yard, clinging to each other, but not speaking. Barnaby knew that the jail was a dull, sad, miserable place, and looked forward to to-morrow, as to a passage from it to something bright and beautiful. He had a vague impression too, that he was expected to be brave — that he was a man of great consequence, and that the prison people would be glad to

make him weep. He trod the ground more firmly as he thought of this, and bade her take heart and cry no more, and feel how steady his hand was. "They call me silly, mother. They shall see — to-morrow!"

Dennis and Hugh were in the court-yard. Hugh came forth from his cell as they did, stretching himself as though he had been sleeping. Dennis sat upon a bench in a corner, with his knees and chin huddled together, and rocked himself to and fro like a person in severe pain.

The mother and son remained on one side of the court, and these two men upon the other. Hugh strode up and down, glancing fiercely every now and then at the bright summer-sky, and looking round, when he had done so, at the walls.

"No reprieve, no reprieve! Nobody comes near us. There's only the night left now!" moaned Dennis faintly, as he wrung his hands. "Do you think they'll reprieve me in the night, brother? I've known reprieves come in the night, afore now. I've known 'em come as late as five, six, and seven o'clock in the morning. Don't you think there's a good chance yet, — don't you? Say you do. Say *you* do, young man," whined the miserable creature, with an imploring gesture towards Barnaby, "or I shall go mad!"

"Better be mad than sane, here," said Hugh. "*Go* mad."

"But tell me what you think. Somebody tell me what he thinks!" cried the wretched object, — so mean, and wretched, and despicable, that even Pity's self might have turned away, at sight of such a being in the likeness of a man — "isn't there a chance for me, — isn't there a good chance for me? Isn't it likely they may be doing

this to frighten me? Don't you think it is? Oh!" he almost shrieked, as he wrung his hands, "won't anybody give me comfort!"

"You ought to be the best, instead of the worst," said Hugh, stopping before him. "Ha, ha, ha! See the hangman, when it comes home to him!"

"You don't know what it is," cried Dennis, actually writhing as he spoke. "I do. That I should come to be worked off! I! I! That *I* should come!"

"And why not?" said Hugh, as he thrust back his matted hair to get a better view of his late associate. "How often, before I knew your trade, did I hear you talking of this as if it was a treat?"

"I a'n't inconsistent," screamed the miserable creature; "I'd talk so again, if I was hangman. Some other man has got my old opinions at this minute. That makes it worse. Somebody's longing to work me off. I know by myself that somebody must be!"

"He'll soon have his longing," said Hugh, resuming his walk. "Think of that, and be quiet."

Although one of these men displayed, in his speech and bearing, the most reckless hardihood; and the other, in his every word and action, testified such an extreme of abject cowardice that it was humiliating to see him; it would be difficult to say which of them would most have repelled and shocked an observer. Hugh's was the dogged desperation of a savage at the stake; the hangman was reduced to a condition little better, if any, than that of a hound with the halter round his neck. Yet, as Mr. Dennis knew and could have told them, these were the two commonest states of mind in persons brought to their pass. Such was the wholesale growth of the seed sown by the law, that this

kind of harvest was usually looked for, as a matter of course.

In one respect they all agreed. The wandering and uncontrollable train of thought, suggesting sudden recollections of things distant and long forgotten and remote from each other — the vague restless craving for something undefined, which nothing could satisfy — the swift flight of the minutes, fusing themselves into hours, as if by enchantment — the rapid coming of the solemn night — the shadow of death always upon them, and yet so dim and faint, that objects the meanest and most trivial started from the gloom beyond, and forced themselves upon the view — the impossibility of holding the mind, even if they had been so disposed, to penitence and preparation, or of keeping it to any point while one hideous fascination tempted it away — these things were common to them all, and varied only in their outward tokens.

“Fetch me the book I left within — upon your bed,” she said to Barnaby, as the clock struck. “Kiss me first!”

He looked in her face, and saw there that the time was come. After a long embrace, he tore himself away, and ran to bring it to her; bidding her not stir till he came back. He soon returned, for a shriek recalled him, — but she was gone.

He ran to the yard-gate, and looked through. They were carrying her away. She had said her heart would break. It was better so.

“Don’t you think,” whimpered Dennis, creeping up to him, as he stood with his feet rooted to the ground, gazing at the blank walls — “don’t you think there’s still a chance? It’s a dreadful end; it’s a terrible end for a

man like me. Don't you think there's a chance? I don't mean for you, I mean for me. Don't let *him* hear us" (meaning Hugh); "he's so desperate."

"Now then," said the officer, who had been lounging in and out with his hands in his pockets, and yawning as if he were in the last extremity for some subject of interest: "it's time to turn in, boys."

"Not yet," cried Dennis, "not yet. Not for an hour yet."

"I say, — your watch goes different from what it used to," returned the man. "Once upon a time it was always too fast. It's got the other fault now."

"My friend," cried the wretched creature, falling on his knees, "my dear friend — you always were my dear friend — there's some mistake. Some letter has been mislaid, or some messenger has been stopped upon the way. He may have fallen dead. I saw a man once, fall down dead in the street, myself, and he had papers in his pocket. Send to inquire. Let somebody go to inquire. They never will hang me. They never can. — Yes, they will," he cried, starting to his feet with a terrible scream. "They'll hang me by a trick, and keep the pardon back. It's a plot against me. I shall lose my life!" And uttering another yell, he fell in a fit upon the ground.

"See the hangman when it comes home to him!" cried Hugh again, as they bore him away — "Ha, ha, ha! Courage, bold Barnaby, what care we? Your hand! They do well to put us out of the world, for if we got loose a second time, we wouldn't let them off so easy, eh? Another shake! A man can die but once. If you wake in the night, sing that out lustily, and fall asleep again. Ha, ha, ha!"

Barnaby glanced once more through the grate into the empty yard ; and then watched Hugh as he strode to the steps leading to his sleeping-cell. He heard him shout, and burst into a roar of laughter, and saw him flourish his hat. Then he turned away himself, like one who walked in his sleep ; and, without any sense of fear or sorrow, lay down on his pallet, listening for the clock to strike again.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE time wore on. The noises in the streets became less frequent by degrees, until silence was scarcely broken save by the bells in church-towers, marking the progress — softer and more stealthy while the city slumbered — of that Great Watcher with the hoary head, who never sleeps or rests. In the brief interval of darkness and repose which feverish towns enjoy, all busy sounds were hushed; and those who awoke from dreams lay listening in their beds, and longed for dawn, and wished the dead of the night were past.

Into the street outside the jail's main wall, workmen came straggling at this solemn hour, in groups of two or three, and meeting in the centre cast their tools upon the ground and spoke in whispers. Others soon issued from the jail itself, bearing on their shoulders planks and beams: these materials being all brought forth, the rest bestirred themselves, and the dull sound of hammers began to echo through the stillness.

Here and there among this knot of laborers, one, with a lantern or a smoky link, stood by to light his fellows at their work; and by its doubtful aid, some might be dimly seen taking up the pavement of the road, while others held great upright posts, or fixed them in the holes thus made for their reception. Some dragged slowly on towards the rest, an empty cart, which they brought rumbling from the prison-yard; while others

erected strong barriers across the street. All were busily engaged. Their dusky figures moving to and fro, at that unusual hour, so active and so silent, might have been taken for those of shadowy creatures toiling at midnight on some ghostly unsubstantial work, which, like themselves, would vanish with the first gleam of day, and leave but morning mist and vapor.

While it was yet dark, a few lookers-on collected, who had plainly come there for the purpose and intended to remain: even those who had to pass the spot on their way to some other place, lingered, and lingered yet, as though the attraction of that were irresistible. Meanwhile the noise of saw and mallet went on briskly, mingled with the clattering of boards on the stone pavement of the road, and sometimes with the workmen's voices as they called to one another. Whenever the chimes of the neighboring church were heard — and that was every quarter of an hour — a strange sensation, instantaneous and indescribable, but perfectly obvious, seemed to pervade them all.

Gradually, a faint brightness appeared in the east, and the air, which had been very warm all through the night, felt cool and chilly. Though there was no daylight yet, the darkness was diminished, and the stars looked pale. The prison, which had been a mere black mass with little shape or form, put on its usual aspect; and ever and anon a solitary watchman could be seen upon its roof, stopping to look down upon the preparations in the street. This man, from forming, as it were, a part of the jail, and knowing, or being supposed to know, all that was passing within, became an object of as much interest, and was as eagerly looked for, and as awfully pointed out, as if he had been a spirit.

By and by, the feeble light grew stronger, and the houses with their sign-boards and inscriptions stood plainly out, in the dull gray morning. Heavy stage-wagons crawled from the inn-yard opposite; and travellers peeped out; and as they rolled sluggishly away cast many a backward look towards the jail. And now, the sun's first beams came glancing into the street; and the night's work, which, in its various stages and in the varied fancies of the lookers-on had taken a hundred shapes, wore its own proper form — a scaffold, and a gibbet.

As the warmth of cheerful day began to shed itself upon the scanty crowd, the murmur of tongues was heard, shutters were thrown open, and blinds drawn up, and those who had slept in rooms over against the prison, where places to see the execution were let at high prices, rose hastily from their beds. In some of the houses, people were busy taking out the window sashes for the better accommodation of spectators; in others, the spectators were already seated, and beguiling the time with cards, or drink, or jokes among themselves. Some had purchased seats upon the house-tops, and were already crawling to their stations from parapet and garret-window. Some were yet bargaining for good places, and stood in them in a state of indecision: gazing at the slowly-swelling crowd, and at the workmen as they rested listlessly against the scaffold — affecting to listen with indifference to the proprietor's eulogy of the commanding view his house afforded, and the surpassing cheapness of his terms.

A fairer morning never shone. From the roofs and upper stories of these buildings, the spires of city churches and the great cathedral dome were visible, ris-

ing up beyond the prison, into the blue sky, and clad in the color of light summer clouds, and showing in the clear atmosphere their every scrap of tracery and fret-work, and every niche and loop-hole. All was brightness and promise, excepting in the street below, into which (for it yet lay in shadow) the eye looked down as into a dark trench, where, in the midst of so much life, and hope, and renewal of existence, stood the terrible instrument of death. It seemed as if the very sun forbore to look upon it.

But it was better, grim and sombre in the shade, than when, the day being more advanced, it stood confessed in the full glare and glory of the sun, with its black paint blistering, and its nooses dangling in the light like loathsome garlands. It was better in the solitude and gloom of midnight with a few forms clustering about it, than in the freshness and the stir of morning: the centre of an eager crowd. It was better haunting the street like a spectre, when men were in their beds, and influencing perchance the city's dreams, than braving the broad day, and thrusting its obscene presence upon their waking senses.

Five o'clock had struck — six — seven — and eight. Along the two main streets at either end of the cross-way, a living stream had now set in, rolling towards the marts of gain and business. Carts, coaches, wagons, trucks, and barrows, forced a passage through the outskirts of the throng, and clattered onward in the same direction. Some of these which were public conveyances and had come from a short distance in the country, stopped; and the driver pointed to the gibbet with his whip, though he might have spared himself the pains, for the heads of all the passengers were turned that way

without his help, and the coach-windows were stuck full of staring eyes. In some of the carts and wagons, women might be seen, glancing fearfully at the same unsightly thing; and even little children were held up above the people's heads to see what kind of toy a gallows was, and learn how men were hanged.

Two rioters were to die before the prison, who had been concerned in the attack upon it; and one directly afterwards in Bloomsbury Square. At nine o'clock a strong body of military marched into the street, and formed and lined a narrow passage into Holborn, which had been indifferently kept all night by constables. Through this, another cart was brought (the one already mentioned had been employed in the construction of the scaffold), and wheeled up to the prison-gate. These preparations made, the soldiers stood at ease; the officers lounged to and fro, in the alley they had made, or talked together at the scaffold's foot; and the concourse, which had been rapidly augmenting for some hours, and still received additions every minute, waited with an impatience which increased with every chime of St. Sepulchre's clock, for twelve at noon.

Up to this time they had been very quiet, comparatively silent, save when the arrival of some new party at a window, hitherto unoccupied, gave them something new to look at or to talk of. But, as the hour approached, a buzz and hum arose, which, deepening every moment, soon swelled into a roar, and seemed to fill the air. No words or even voices could be distinguished in this clamor, nor did they speak much to each other; though such as were better informed upon the topic than the rest, would tell their neighbors, perhaps, that they might know the hangman when he came out, by his

being the shorter one: and that the man who was to suffer with him was named Hugh: and that it was Barnaby Rudge who would be hanged in Bloomsbury Square.

The hum grew, as the time drew near, so loud, that those who were at the windows could not hear the church-clock strike, though it was close at hand. Nor had they any need to hear it, either, for they could see it in the people's faces. So surely as another quarter chimed, there was a movement in the crowd—as if something had passed over it—as if the light upon them had been changed—in which the fact was readable as on a brazen dial, figured by a giant's hand.

Three quarters past eleven! The murmur now was deafening, yet every man seemed mute. Look where you would among the crowd, you saw strained eyes and lips compressed; it would have been difficult for the most vigilant observer to point this way or that, and say that yonder man had cried out. It were as easy to detect the motion of lips in a sea-shell.

Three quarters past eleven! Many spectators who had retired from the windows, came back refreshed, as though their watch had just begun. Those who had fallen asleep, roused themselves; and every person in the crowd made one last effort to better his position—which caused a press against the sturdy barriers that made them bend and yield like twigs. The officers, who until now had kept together, fell into their several positions, and gave the words of command. Swords were drawn, muskets shouldered, and the bright steel winding its way among the crowd, gleamed and glittered in the sun like a river. Along this shining path, two men came hurrying on, leading a horse, which was

speedily harnessed to the cart at the prison-door. Then, a profound silence replaced the tumult that had so long been gathering, and a breathless pause ensued. Every window was now choked up with heads; the house-tops teemed with people — clinging to chimneys, peering over gable-ends, and holding on where the sudden loosening of any brick or stone would dash them down into the street. The church tower, the church roof, the church-yard, the prison leads, the very water-spouts and lamp-posts — every inch of room — swarmed with human life.

At the first stroke of twelve the prison bell began to toll. Then the roar — mingled now with cries of “Hats off!” and “Poor fellows!” and, from some specks in the great concourse, with a shriek or groan — burst forth again. It was terrible to see — if any one in that distraction of excitement could have seen — the world of eager eyes, all strained upon the scaffold and the beam.

The hollow murmuring was heard within the jail as plainly as without. The three were brought forth into the yard, together, as it resounded through the air. They knew its import well.

“D’y e hear?” cried Hugh, undaunted by the sound. “They expect us! I heard them gathering when I woke in the night, and turned over on t’other side and fell asleep again. We shall see how they welcome the hangman, now that it comes home to him. Ha, ha, ha!”

The Ordinary coming up at this moment, reproved him for his indecent mirth, and advised him to alter his demeanor.

“And why, master?” said Hugh. “Can I do bet-

ter than bear it easily? *You* bear it easily enough. Oh! never tell me," he cried, as the other would have spoken, "for all your sad look and your solemn air, you think little enough of it! They say you're the best maker of lobster salads in London. Ha, ha! I've heard that, you see, before now. Is it a good one, this morning — is your hand in? How does the breakfast look? I hope there's enough, and to spare, for all this hungry company that'll sit down to it, when the sight's over."

"I fear," observed the clergyman, shaking his head, "that you are incorrigible."

"You're right. I am," rejoined Hugh sternly. "Be no hypocrite, master! You make a merry-making of this, every month; let me be merry, too. If you want a frightened fellow, there's one that'll suit you. Try your hand upon him."

He pointed, as he spoke, to Dennis, who, with his legs trailing on the ground, was held between two men; and who trembled so, that all his joints and limbs seemed racked by spasms. Turning from this wretched spectacle, he called to Barnaby, who stood apart.

"What cheer, Barnaby? Don't be downcast, lad. Leave that to *him*."

"Bless you," cried Barnaby, stepping lightly towards him, "I'm not frightened, Hugh. I'm quite happy. I wouldn't desire to live now, if they'd let me. Look at me! Am I afraid to die? Will they see *me* tremble?"

Hugh gazed for a moment, at his face, on which there was a strange, unearthly smile; and at his eye, which sparkled brightly; and interposing between him and the Ordinary, gruffly whispered to the latter: —

"I wouldn't say much to him, master, if I was you. He may spoil your appetite for breakfast, though you *are* used to it."

He was the only one of the three who had washed or trimmed himself that morning. Neither of the others had done so, since their doom was pronounced. He still wore the broken peacock's feathers in his hat; and all his usual scraps of finery were carefully disposed about his person. His kindling eye, his firm step, his proud and resolute bearing, might have graced some lofty act of heroism; some voluntary sacrifice, born of a noble cause and pure enthusiasm; rather than that felon's death.

But all these things increased his guilt. They were mere assumptions. The law had declared it so, and so it must be. The good minister had been greatly shocked, not a quarter of an hour before, at his parting with Grip. For one in his condition, to fondle a bird! —

The yard was filled with people; bluff civic functionaries, officers of justice, soldiers, the curious in such matters, and guests who had been bidden as to a wedding. Hugh looked about him, nodded gloomily to some person in authority, who indicated with his hand in what direction he was to proceed; and clapping Barnaby on the shoulder, passed out with the gait of a lion.

They entered a large room, so near to the scaffold that the voices of those who stood about it, could be plainly heard: some beseeching the javelin-men to take them out of the crowd: others crying to those behind, to stand back, for they were pressed to death and suffocating for want of air.

In the middle of this chamber, two smiths with hammers, stood beside an anvil. Hugh walked straight up

to them, and set his foot upon it with a sound as though it had been struck by a heavy weapon. Then, with folded arms, he stood to have his irons knocked off: scowling haughtily round, as those who were present eyed him narrowly and whispered to each other.

It took so much time to drag Dennis in, that this ceremony was over with Hugh, and nearly over with Barnaby, before he appeared. He no sooner came into the place he knew so well, however, and among faces with which he was so familiar, than he recovered strength and sense enough to clasp his hands and make a last appeal.

"Gentlemen, good gentlemen," cried the abject creature, grovelling down upon his knees, and actually prostrating himself upon the stone floor: "Governor, dear governor—honorable sheriffs—worthy gentlemen—have mercy upon a wretched man that has served His Majesty, and the Law, and Parliament, for so many years, and don't—don't let me die—because of a mistake."

"Dennis," said the governor of the jail, "you know what the course is, and that the order came with the rest. You know that we could do nothing, even if we would."

"All I ask, sir,—all I want and beg, is time, to make it sure," cried the trembling wretch, looking wildly round for sympathy. "The King and Government can't know it's me; I'm sure they can't know it's me; or they never would bring me to this dreadful slaughter-house. They know my name, but they don't know it's the same man. Stop my execution—for charity's sake stop my execution, gentlemen—till they can be told that I've been hangman here, nigh thirty year. Will no one go and tell them?" he implored, clinching his hands and glaring round, and round, and round again—"will no charitable person go and tell them!"

"Mr. Akerman," said a gentleman who stood by, after a moment's pause, "since it may possibly produce in this unhappy man a better frame of mind, even at this last minute, let me assure him that he was well known to have been the hangman, when his sentence was considered."

—"But perhaps they think on that account that the punishment's not so great," cried the criminal, shuffling towards this speaker on his knees, and holding up his folded hands; "whereas it's worse, it's worse a hundred times, to me than any man. Let them know that, sir. Let them know that. They've made it worse to me by giving me so much to do. Stop my execution till they know that!"

The governor beckoned with his hand, and the two men, who had supported him before, approached. He uttered a piercing cry:—

"Wait! Wait. Only a moment—only one moment more! Give me a last chance of reprieve. One of us three is to go to Bloomsbury Square. Let me be the one. It may come in that time; it's sure to come. In the Lord's name let me be sent to Bloomsbury Square. Don't hang me here. It's murder!"

They took him to the anvil: but even then he could be heard above the clinking of the smith's hammers, and the hoarse raging of the crowd, crying that he knew of Hugh's birth—that his father was living, and was a gentleman of influence and rank—that he had family secrets in his possession—that he could tell nothing unless they gave him time, but must die with them on his mind; and he continued to rave in this sort until his voice failed him, and he sank down a mere heap of clothes between the two attendants.

It was at this moment that the clock struck the first

stroke of twelve, and the bell began to toll. The various officers, with the two sheriffs at their head, moved towards the door. All was ready when the last chime came upon the ear.

They told Hugh this, and asked if he had anything to say.

"To say!" he cried. "Not I. I'm ready. — Yes," he added, as his eye fell upon Barnaby, "I have a word to say, too. Come hither, lad."

There was, for the moment, something kind, and even tender, struggling in his fierce aspect, as he wrung his poor companion by the hand. "I'll say this," he cried, looking firmly round, "that if I had ten lives to lose, and the loss of each would give me ten times the agony of the hardest death, I'd lay them all down — ay I would, though you gentlemen may not believe it — to save this one. This one," he added, wringing his hand again, "that will be lost through me."

"Not through you," said the idiot, mildly. "Don't say that. You were not to blame. You have been always very good to me. — Hugh, we shall know what makes the stars shine, *now!*"

"I took him from her in a reckless mood, and didn't think what harm would come of it," said Hugh, laying his hand upon his head, and speaking in a lower voice. "I ask her pardon, and his. — Look here," he added roughly, in his former tone. "You see this lad?"

They murmured "Yes," and seemed to wonder why he asked.

"That gentleman yonder" — pointing to the clergyman — "has often in the last few days spoken to me of faith, and strong belief. You see what I am — more brute than man, — as I have been often told — but I

had faith enough to believe, and did believe as strongly as any of you gentlemen can believe anything, that this one life would be spared. See what he is — Look at him !”

Barnaby had moved towards the door, and stood beckoning him to follow.

“If this was not faith, and strong belief !” cried Hugh, raising his right arm aloft, and looking upward like a savage prophet whom the near approach of Death had filled with inspiration, “where are they ! What else should teach me — me, born as I was born, and reared as I have been reared — to hope for any mercy in this hardened, cruel, unrelenting place ! Upon these human shambles, I, who never raised his hand in prayer till now, call down the wrath of God ! On that black tree, of which I am the ripened fruit, I do invoke the curse of all its victims, past, and present, and to come. On the head of that man, who in his conscience, owns me for his son, I leave the wish that he may never sicken on his bed of down, but die a violent death as I do now, and have the night-wind for his only mourner. To this I say, Amen, amen !”

His arm fell downward by his side ; he turned ; and moved towards them with a steady step, the man he had been before.

“There is nothing more ?” said the Governor.

Hugh motioned Barnaby not to come near him (though without looking in the direction where he stood) and answered, “There is nothing more.”

“Move forward !”

— “Unless,” said Hugh, glancing hurriedly back, — “unless any person here has a fancy for a dog ; and not then, unless he means to use him well. There’s

one, belongs to me, at the house I came from, and it wouldn't be easy to find a better. He'll whine at first, but he'll soon get over that. — You wonder that I think about a dog just now," he added, with a kind of laugh, "If any man deserved it of me half as well, I'd think of *him*."

He spoke no more, but moved onward in his place, with a careless air, though listening at the same time to the Service for the Dead, with something between sullen attention and quickened curiosity. As soon as he had passed the door, his miserable associate was carried out; and the crowd beheld the rest.

Barnaby would have mounted the steps at the same time — indeed he would have gone before them, but in both attempts he was restrained, as he was to undergo the sentence elsewhere. In a few minutes the sheriffs reappeared, the same procession was again formed, and they passed through various rooms and passages to another door — that at which the cart was waiting. He held down his head to avoid seeing what he knew his eyes must otherwise encounter, and took his seat sorrowfully, and yet with something of a childish pride and pleasure, — in the vehicle. The officers fell into their places at the sides, in front, and in the rear; the sheriffs' carriages rolled on; a guard of soldiers surrounded the whole; and they moved slowly forward through the throng and pressure towards Lord Mansfield's ruined house.

It was a sad sight — all the show, and strength, and glitter, assembled round one helpless creature — and sadder yet to note, as he rode along, how his wandering thoughts found strange encouragement in the crowded windows and the concourse in the streets; and how,

even then, he felt the influence of the bright sky, and looked up, smiling, into its deep unfathomable blue. But there had been many such sights since the riots were over — some so moving in their nature, and so repulsive too, that they were far more calculated to awaken pity for the sufferers, than respect for that law whose strong arm seemed in more than one case to be as wantonly stretched forth now that all was safe, as it had been basely paralyzed in time of danger.

Two cripples — both mere boys — one with a leg of wood, one who dragged his twisted limbs along by the help of a crutch, were hanged in this same Bloomsbury Square. As the cart was about to glide from under them, it was observed that they stood with their faces from, not to, the house they had assisted to despoil; and their misery was protracted that this omission might be remedied. Another boy was hanged in Bow Street; other young lads to various quarters of the town. Four wretched women, too, were put to death. In a word, those who suffered as rioters were, for the most part, the weakest, meanest, and most miserable among them. It was an exquisite satire upon the false religious cry which had led to so much misery, that some of these people owned themselves to be catholics, and begged to be attended by their own priests.

One young man was hanged in Bishopsgate Street, whose aged gray-headed father waited for him at the gallows, kissed him at its foot when he arrived, and sat there on the ground, until they took him down. They would have given him the body of his child; but he had no hearse, no coffin, nothing to remove it in, being too poor — and walked meekly away beside the cart that took it back to prison, trying as he went to touch its lifeless hand.

But, the crowd had forgotten these matters, or cared little about them if they lived in their memory; and while one great multitude fought and hustled to get near the gibbet before Newgate, for a parting look, another followed in the train of poor lost Barnaby, to swell the throng that waited for him on the spot.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

ON this same day, and about this very hour, Mr Willet, the elder, sat smoking his pipe in a chamber of the Black Lion. Although it was hot summer weather, Mr. Willet sat close to the fire. He was in a state of profound cogitation, with his own thoughts, and it was his custom at such times to stew himself slowly, under the impression that that process of cookery was favorable to the melting out of his ideas, which, when he began to simmer, sometimes oozed forth so copiously as to astonish even himself.

Mr. Willet had been several thousand times comforted by his friends and acquaintance, with the assurance that for the loss he had sustained in the damage done to the Maypole, he could "come upon the county." But as this phrase happened to bear an unfortunate resemblance to the popular expression of "coming on the parish," it suggested to Mr. Willet's mind no more consolatory visions than pauperism on an extensive scale, and ruin in a capacious aspect. Consequently, he had never failed to receive the intelligence with a rueful shake of the head, or a dreary stare, and had been always observed to appear much more melancholy after a visit of condolence than at any other time in the whole four-and-twenty hours.

It chanced, however, that sitting over the fire on this particular occasion — perhaps because he was, as it were,

done to a turn ; perhaps because he was in an unusually bright state of mind ; perhaps because he had considered the subject so long ; perhaps because of all these favoring circumstances taken together — it chanced that, sitting over the fire on this particular occasion, Mr. Willet did, afar off and in the remotest depths of his intellect, perceive a kind of lurking hint or faint suggestion, that out of the public purse there might issue funds for the restoration of the Maypole to its former high place among the taverns of the earth. And this dim ray of light did so diffuse itself within him, and did so kindle up and shine, that at last he had it as plainly and visibly before him as the blaze by which he sat : and fully persuaded that he was the first to make the discovery, and that he had started, hunted down, fallen upon, and knocked on the head, a perfectly original idea which had never presented itself to any other man, alive or dead, he laid down his pipe, rubbed his hands, and chuckled audibly.

“ Why, father ! ” cried Joe, entering at the moment, “ you’re in spirits to-day ! ”

“ It’s nothing partickler,” said Mr. Willet, chuckling again. “ It’s nothing at all partickler, Joseph. Tell me something about the Salwanners.” Having preferred this request, Mr. Willet chuckled a third time, and after these unusual demonstrations of levity, he put his pipe in his mouth again.

“ What shall I tell you, father ? ” asked Joe, laying his hand upon his sire’s shoulder, and looking down into his face. “ That I have come back, poorer than a church mouse. You know that. That I have come back, maimed and crippled ? You know that.”

“ It was took off,” muttered Mr. Willet, with his eyes

upon the fire, "at the defence of the Salwanners, in America, where the war is."

"Quite right," returned Joe, smiling, and leaning with his remaining elbow on the back of his father's chair; "the very subject I came to speak to you about. A man with one arm, father, is not of much use in the busy world."

This was one of those vast propositions which Mr. Willet had never considered for an instant, and required time to "tackle." Wherefore he made no answer.

"At all events," said Joe, "he can't pick and choose his means of earning a livelihood, as another man may. He can't say 'I will turn my hand to this,' or 'I won't turn my hand to that,' but must take what he can do, and be thankful it's no worse. — What did you say?"

Mr. Willet had been softly repeating to himself, in a musing tone, the words "defence of the Salwanners:" but he seemed embarrassed at having been overheard, and answered "Nothing."

"Now look here, father. — Mr. Edward has come to England from the West Indies. When he was lost sight of (I ran away on the same day, father), he made a voyage to one of the islands, where a school-friend of his had settled; and, finding him, wasn't too proud to be employed on his estate, and — and in short, got on well, and is prospering, and has come over here on business of his own, and is going back again speedily. Our returning nearly at the same time, and meeting in the course of the late troubles, has been a good thing every way; for it has not only enabled us to do old friends some service, but has opened a path in life for me which I may tread without being a burden upon you. To be plain, father, he can employ me; I have satisfied my-

self that I can be of real use to him ; and I am going to carry my one arm away with him, and to make the most of it."

In the mind's eye of Mr. Willet, the West Indies, and indeed all foreign countries, were inhabited by savage nations, who were perpetually burying pipes of peace, flourishing tomahawks, and puncturing strange patterns in their bodies. He no sooner heard this announcement, therefore, than he leaned back in his chair, took his pipe from his lips, and stared at his son with as much dismay as if he already beheld him tied to a stake, and tortured for the entertainment of a lively population. In what form of expression his feelings would have found a vent, it is impossible to say. Nor is it necessary : for, before a syllable occurred to him, Dolly Varden came running into the room, in tears, threw herself on Joe's breast without a word of explanation, and clasped her white arms round his neck.

"Dolly !" cried Joe. "Dolly !"

"Ay, call me that ; call me that always," exclaimed the locksmith's little daughter ; "never speak coldly to me, never be distant, never again reprove me for the follies I have long repented, or I shall die, Joe."

"I reprove you !" said Joe.

"Yes — for every kind and honest word you uttered, went to my heart. For you, who have borne so much from me — for you, who owe your sufferings and pain to my caprice — for you to be so kind — so noble to me, Joe" —

He could say nothing to her. Not a syllable. There was an odd sort of eloquence in his one arm, which had crept round her waist : but his lips were mute.

"If you had reminded me by a word — only by one

short word," sobbed Dolly, clinging yet closer to him, "how little I deserved that you should treat me with so much forbearance; if you had exulted only for one moment in your triumph, I could have borne it better."

"Triumph!" repeated Joe, with a smile which seemed to say, "I am a pretty figure for that."

"Yes, triumph," she cried, with her whole heart and soul in her earnest voice, and gushing tears; "for it *is* one. I am glad to think and know it is. I wouldn't be less humbled, dear — I wouldn't be without the recollection of that last time we spoke together in this place — no, not if I could recall the past, and make our parting yesterday."

Did ever lover look as Joe looked now!

"Dear Joe," said Dolly, "I always loved you — in my own heart I always did, although I was so vain and giddy. I hoped you would come back that night. I made quite sure you would. I prayed for it on my knees. Through all these long, long years, I have never once forgotten you, or left off hoping that this happy time might come."

The eloquence of Joe's arm surpassed the most impassioned language; and so did that of his lips — yet he said nothing, either.

"And now, at last," cried Dolly, trembling with the fervor of her speech, "if you were sick, and shattered in your every limb; if you were ailing, weak, and sorrowful; if, instead of being what you are, you were in everybody's eyes but mine the wreck and ruin of a man; I would be your wife, dear love, with greater pride and joy, than if you were the stateliest lord in England!"

"What have I done," cried Joe, "what have I done to meet with this reward?"

"You have taught me," said Dolly, raising her pretty face to his, "to know myself, and your worth; to be something better than I was; to be more deserving of your true and manly nature. In years to come, dear Joe, you shall find that you have done so; for I will be, not only now, when we are young and full of hope, but when we have grown old and weary, your patient, gentle, never-tiring wife. I will never know a wish or care beyond our home and you, and I will always study how to please you with my best affection and my most devoted love. I will: indeed I will!"

Joe could only repeat his former eloquence — but it was very much to the purpose.

"They know of this, at home," said Dolly. "For your sake, I would leave even them; but they know it, and are glad of it, and are as proud of you as I am, and as full of gratitude. — You'll not come and see me as a poor friend who knew me when I was a girl, will you, dear Joe?"

Well, well! It don't matter what Joe said in answer, but he said a great deal; and Dolly said a great deal too: and he folded Dolly in his one arm pretty tight, considering that it was but one; and Dolly made no resistance: and if ever two people were happy in this world — which is not an utterly miserable one, with all its faults — we may, with some appearance of certainty, conclude that they were.

To say that during these proceedings Mr. Willet the elder underwent the greatest emotions of astonishment of which our common nature is susceptible — to say that he was in a perfect paralysis of surprise, and that he wandered into the most stupendous and theretofore unattainable heights of complicated amazement — would be

to shadow forth his state of mind in the feeblest and lamest terms. If a roc, an eagle, a griffin, a flying elephant, a winged sea-horse, had suddenly appeared, and, taking him on its back, carried him bodily into the heart of the "Salwanners," it would have been to him as an every-day occurrence, in comparison with what he now beheld. To be sitting quietly by, seeing and hearing these things; to be completely overlooked, unnoticed, and disregarded, while his son and a young lady were talking to each other in the most impassioned manner, kissing each other, and making themselves in all respects perfectly at home; was a position so tremendous, so inexplicable, so utterly beyond the widest range of his capacity of comprehension, that he fell into a lethargy of wonder, and could no more rouse himself than an enchanted sleeper in the first year of his fairy lease, a century long.

"Father," said Joe, presenting Dolly. "You know who this is?"

Mr. Willet looked first at her, then at his son, then back again at Dolly, and then made an ineffectual effort to extract a whiff from his pipe, which had gone out long ago.

"Say a word, father, if it's only 'how d'ye do,'" urged Joe.

"Certainly, Joseph," answered Mr. Willet. "Oh yes! Why not?"

"To be sure," said Joe. "Why not?"

"Ah!" replied his father. "Why not?" and with this remark, which he uttered in a low voice as though he were discussing some grave question with himself, he used the little finger — if any of his fingers can be said to have come under that denomination — of his right hand as a tobacco-stopper, and was silent again.

And so he sat for half an hour at least, although Dolly, in the most endearing of manners, hoped a dozen times, that he was not angry with her. So he sat for half an hour, quite motionless, and looking all the while like nothing so much as a great Dutch Pin or Skittle. At the expiration of that period, he suddenly, and without the least notice, burst (to the great consternation of the young people) into a very loud and very short laugh; and repeating "Certainly, Joseph. Oh yes! Why not?" went out for a walk.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

OLD John did not walk near the Golden Key, for between the Golden Key and the Black Lion there lay a wilderness of streets — as everybody knows who is acquainted with the relative bearings of Clerkenwell and Whitechapel — and he was by no means famous for pedestrian exercises. But the Golden Key lies in our way, though it was out of his; so to the Golden Key this chapter goes.

The Golden Key itself, fair emblem of the locksmith's trade, had been pulled down by the rioters, and roughly trampled under foot. But, now, it was hoisted up again in all the glory of a new coat of paint, and showed more bravely even than in days of yore. Indeed the whole house-front was spruce and trim, and so freshened up throughout, that if there yet remained at large any of the rioters who had been concerned in the attack upon it, the sight of the old, goodly, prosperous dwelling, so revived, must have been to them as gall and worm-wood.

The shutters of the shop were closed, however, and the window-blinds above were all pulled down, and in place of its usual cheerful appearance, the house had a look of sadness and an air of mourning; which the neighbors, who in old days had often seen poor Barnaby go in and out, were at no loss to understand. The door stood partly open; but the locksmith's hammer was unheard;

the cat sat moping on the ashy forge ; all was deserted, dark, and silent.

On the threshold of this door, Mr. Haredale and Edward Chester met. The younger man gave place ; and both passing in with a familiar air, which seemed to denote that they were tarrying there or were well-accustomed to go to and fro unquestioned, shut it behind him.

Entering the old back-parlor, and ascending the flight of stairs, abrupt and steep, and quaintly fashioned as of old, they turned into the best room ; the pride of Mrs. Varden's heart, and erst the scene of Miggs's household labors.

"Varden brought the mother here last evening, he told me?" said Mr. Haredale.

"She is above-stairs now — in the room over here," Edward rejoined. "Her grief, they say, is past all telling. I needn't add — for that you know beforehand, sir — that the care, humanity, and sympathy of these good people have no bounds."

"I am sure of that. Heaven repay them for it, and for much more ! Varden is out?"

"He returned with your messenger, who arrived almost at the moment of his coming home himself. He was out the whole night — but that of course you know. He was with you the greater part of it?"

"He was. Without him, I should have lacked my right hand. He is an older man than I ; but nothing can conquer him."

"The cheeriest, stoutest-hearted fellow in the world."

"He has a right to be. He has a right to be. A better creature never lived. He reaps what he has sown — no more."

"It is not all men," said Edward, after a moment's hesitation, "who have the happiness to do that."

"More than you imagine," returned Mr. Haredale. "We note the harvest more than the seed-time. You do so in me."

In truth his pale and haggard face, and gloomy bearing, had so far influenced the remark, that Edward was, for the moment, at a loss to answer him.

"Tut, tut," said Mr. Haredale, "'twas not very difficult to read a thought so natural. But you are mistaken nevertheless. I have had my share of sorrows — more than the common lot, perhaps — but I have borne them ill. I have broken where I should have bent; and have mused and brooded, when my spirit should have mixed with all God's great creation. The men who learn endurance, are they who call the whole world brother. I have turned *from* the world, and I pay the penalty."

Edward would have interposed, but he went on without giving him time.

"It is too late to evade it now. I sometimes think, that if I had to live my life once more, I might amend this fault — not so much, I discover when I search my mind, for the love of what is right, as for my own sake. But even when I make these better resolutions, I instinctively recoil from the idea of suffering again what I have undergone; and in this circumstance I find the unwelcome assurance that I should still be the same man, though I could cancel the past, and begin anew, with its experience to guide me."

"Nay, you make too sure of that," said Edward.

"You think so," Mr. Haredale answered, "and I am glad you do. I know myself better, and therefore distrust myself more. Let us leave this subject for another

— not so far removed from it as it might, at first sight, seem to be. Sir, you still love my niece, and she is still attached to you.”

“I have that assurance from her own lips,” said Edward, “and you know — I am sure you know — that I would not exchange it for any blessing life could yield me.”

“You are frank, honorable, and disinterested,” said Mr. Haredale; “you have forced the conviction that you are so, even on my once-jaundiced mind, and I believe you. Wait here till I come back.”

He left the room as he spoke; but soon returned with his niece.

“On that first and only time,” he said, looking from the one to the other, “when we three stood together under her father’s roof, I told you to quit it, and charged you never to return.”

“It is the only circumstance arising out of our love,” observed Edward, “that I have forgotten.”

“You own a name,” said Mr. Haredale, “I had deep reason to remember. I was moved and goaded by recollections of personal wrong and injury, I know, but, even now I cannot charge myself with having, then, or ever, lost sight of a heartfelt desire for her true happiness; or with having acted — however much I was mistaken — with any other impulse than the one pure, single, earnest wish to be to her, as far as in my inferior nature lay, the father she had lost.”

“Dear uncle,” cried Emma, “I have known no parent but you. I have loved the memory of others, but I have loved you all my life. Never was father kinder to his child than you have been to me, without the interval of one harsh hour, since I can first remember.”

"You speak too fondly," he answered, "and yet I cannot wish you were less partial; for I have a pleasure in hearing those words, and shall have in calling them to mind when we are far asunder, which nothing else could give me. Bear with me for a moment longer, Edward, for she and I have been together many years; and although I believe that in resigning her to you I put the seal upon her future happiness, I find it needs an effort."

He pressed her tenderly to his bosom, and after a minute's pause, resumed:—

"I have done you wrong, sir, and I ask your forgiveness—in no common phrase, or show of sorrow; but with earnestness and sincerity. In the same spirit, I acknowledge to you both that the time has been when I connived at treachery and falsehood—which if I did not perpetrate myself, I still permitted—to rend you two asunder."

"You judge yourself too harshly," said Edward. "Let these things rest."

"They rise up in judgment against me when I look back, and not now for the first time," he answered. "I cannot part from you without your full forgiveness; for busy life and I have little left in common now, and I have regrets enough to carry into solitude, without addition to the stock."

"You bear a blessing from us both," said Emma. "Never mingle thoughts of me—of me who owe you so much love and duty—with anything but undying affection and gratitude for the past, and bright hopes for the future."

"The future," returned her uncle, with a melancholy smile, "is a bright word for you, and its image should be wreathed with cheerful hopes. Mine is of another kind,

but it will be one of peace, and free, I trust, from care or passion. When you quit England I shall leave it too. There are cloisters abroad ; and now that the two great objects of my life are set at rest, I know no better home. You droop at that, forgetting I am growing old, and that my course is nearly run. Well, we will speak of it again — not once or twice, but many times ; and you shall give me cheerful counsel, Emma.”

“And you will take it?” asked his niece.

“I’ll listen to it,” he answered, with a kiss, “and it will have its weight, be certain. What have I left to say? You have, of late, been much together. It is better and more fitting that the circumstances attendant on the past, which wrought your separation, and sowed between you suspicion and distrust, should not be entered on by me.”

“Much, much better,” whispered Emma.

“I avow my share in them,” said Mr. Haredale, “though I held it, at the time, in detestation. Let no man turn aside, ever so slightly, from the broad path of honor, on the plausible pretence that he is justified by the goodness of his end. All good ends can be worked out by good means. Those that cannot, are bad ; and may be counted so at once, and left alone.”

He looked from her to Edward, and said in a gentler tone : —

“In goods and fortune you are now nearly equal. I have been her faithful steward, and to that remnant of a richer property which my brother left her, I desire to add, in token of my love, a poor pittance, scarcely worth the mention, for which I have no longer any need. I am glad you go abroad. Let our ill-fated house remain the ruin it is. When you return, after a few thriving

years, you will command a better, and a more fortunate one. We are friends?"

Edward took his extended hand, and grasped it heartily.

"You are neither slow nor cold in your response," said Mr. Haredale, doing the like by him, "and when I look upon you now, and know you, I feel that I would choose you for her husband. Her father had a generous nature, and you would have pleased him well. I give her to you in his name, and with his blessing. If the world and I part in this act, we part on happier terms than we have lived for many a day."

He placed her in his arms, and would have left the room, but that he was stopped in his passage to the door by a great noise at a distance, which made them start and pause.

It was a loud shouting, mingled with boisterous acclamations, that rent the very air. It drew nearer and nearer every moment, and approached so rapidly, that, even while they listened, it burst into a deafening confusion of sounds at the street corner.

"This must be stopped — quieted," said Mr. Haredale, hastily. "We should have foreseen this, and provided against it. I will go out to them at once."

But, before he could reach the door, and before Edward could catch up his hat and follow him, they were again arrested by a loud shriek from above-stairs: and the locksmith's wife, bursting in, and fairly running into Mr. Haredale's arms, cried out: —

"She knows it all, dear sir! — she knows it all! We broke it out to her by degrees, and she is quite prepared." Having made this communication, and furthermore thanked Heaven with great fervor and heartiness,

the good lady, according to the custom of matrons on all occasions of excitement, fainted away directly.

They ran to the window, threw up the sash, and looked into the crowded street. Among a dense mob of persons, of whom not one was for an instant still, the locksmith's ruddy face and burly form could be descried, beating about as though he was struggling with a rough sea. Now, he was carried back a score of yards, now onward nearly to the door, now back again, now forced against the opposite houses, now against those adjoining his own : now carried up a flight of steps, and greeted by the outstretched hands of half a hundred men, while the whole tumultuous concourse stretched their throats, and cheered with all their might. Though he was really in a fair way to be torn to pieces in the general enthusiasm, the locksmith, nothing discomposed, echoed their shouts till he was hoarse as they, and in a glow of joy and right good-humor, waved his hat until the daylight shone between its brim and crown.

But in all the bandyings from hand to hand, and strivings to and fro, and sweepings here and there, which — saving that he looked more jolly and more radiant after every struggle — troubled his peace of mind no more than if he had been a straw upon the water's surface, he never once released his firm grasp of an arm, drawn tight through his. He sometimes turned to clap this friend upon the back, or whisper in his ear a word of stanch encouragement, or cheer him with a smile ; but his great care was to shield him from the pressure, and force a passage for him to the Golden Key. Passive and timid, scared, pale, and wondering, and gazing at the throng as if he were newly risen from the dead, and felt himself a ghost among the living, Barnaby — not Bar-

naby in the spirit, but in flesh and blood, with pulses, sinews, nerves, and beating heart, and strong affections — clung to his stout old friend, and followed where he led.

And thus, in course of time, they reached the door, held ready for their entrance by no unwilling hands. Then slipping in, and shutting out the crowd by main force, Gabriel stood between Mr. Haredale and Edward Chester, and Barnaby, rushing up the stairs, fell upon his knees beside his mother's bed.

"Such is the blessed end, sir," cried the panting locksmith, to Mr. Haredale, "of the best day's work we ever did. The rogues! it's been hard fighting to get away from 'em. I almost thought, once or twice, they'd have been too much for us with their kindness!"

They had striven, all the previous day, to rescue Barnaby from his impending fate. Failing in their attempts, in the first quarter to which they addressed themselves, they renewed them in another. Failing there, likewise, they began afresh at midnight; and made their way, not only to the judge and jury who had tried him, but to men of influence at court, to the young Prince of Wales, and even to the antechamber of the king himself. Successful at last, in awakening an interest in his favor, and an inclination to inquire more dispassionately into his case, they had had an interview with the minister, in his bed, so late as eight o'clock that morning. The result of a searching inquiry (in which they, who had known the poor fellow from his childhood, did other good service besides bringing it about) was, that between eleven and 'twelve o'clock, a free pardon to Barnaby Rudge was made out and signed, and intrusted to a horse-soldier for instant conveyance to the place of execution. This

courier reached the spot just as the cart appeared in sight; and Barnaby being carried back to jail, Mr. Haredale, assured that all was safe, had gone straight from Bloomsbury Square to the Golden Key, leaving to Gabriel the grateful task of bringing him home in triumph.

"I needn't say," observed the locksmith, when he had shaken hands with all the males in the house, and hugged all the females, five-and-forty times, at least, "that, except among ourselves, *I* didn't want to make a triumph of it. But, directly we got into the street we were known, and this hubbub began. Of the two," he added, as he wiped his crimson face, "and after experience of both, I think I'd rather be taken out of my house by a crowd of enemies, than escorted home by a mob of friends!"

It was plain enough, however, that this was mere talk on Gabriel's part, and that the whole proceeding afforded him the keenest delight; for the people continuing to make a great noise without, and to cheer as if their voices were in the freshest order, and good for a fortnight, he sent up-stairs for Grip (who had come home at his master's back, and had acknowledged the favors of the multitude by drawing blood from every finger that came within his reach), and with the bird upon his arm, presented himself at the first-floor window, and waved his hat again until it dangled by a shred, between his fingers and thumb. This demonstration having been received with appropriate shouts, and silence being in some degree restored, he thanked them for their sympathy; and taking the liberty to inform them that there was a sick person in the house, proposed that they should give three cheers for King George, three more

for Old England, and three more for nothing particular, as a closing ceremony. The crowd assenting, substituted Gabriel Varden for the nothing particular; and giving him one over, for good measure, dispersed in high good-humor.

What congratulations were exchanged among the inmates at the Golden Key, when they were left alone; what an overflowing of joy and happiness there was among them; how incapable it was of expression in Barnaby's own person; and how he went wildly from one to another, until he became so far tranquillized, as to stretch himself on the ground beside his mother's couch, and fall into a deep sleep; are matters that need not be told. And it is well they happened to be of this class, for they would be very hard to tell, were their narration ever so indispensable.

Before leaving this bright picture, it may be well to glance at a dark and very different one which was presented to only a few eyes, that same night.

The scene was a church-yard; the time, midnight; the persons, Edward Chester, a clergyman, a grave-digger, and the four bearers of a homely coffin. They stood about a grave which had been newly dug, and one of the bearers held up a dim lantern, — the only light there, — which shed its feeble ray upon the book of prayer. He placed it for a moment on the coffin, when he and his companions were about to lower it down. There was no inscription on the lid.

The mould fell solemnly upon the last house of this nameless man; and the rattling dust left a dismal echo even in the accustomed ears of those who had borne it to its resting-place. The grave was filled in to the top, and trodden down. They all left the spot together.

"You never saw him, living?" asked the clergyman of Edward.

"Often, years ago; not knowing him for my brother."

"Never since?"

"Never. Yesterday, he steadily refused to see me. It was urged upon him, many times, at my desire."

"Still he refused? That was hardened and unnatural."

"Do you think so?"

"I infer that you do not?"

"You are right. We hear the world wonder, every day, at monsters of ingratitude. Did it never occur to you that it often looks for monsters of affection, as though they were things of course?"

They had reached the gate by this time, and bidding each other good-night, departed on their separate ways.

CHAPTER LXXX.

THAT afternoon, when he had slept off his fatigue; had shaved, and washed, and dressed, and freshened himself from top to toe; when he had dined, comforted himself with a pipe, an extra Toby, a nap in the great arm-chair, and a quiet chat with Mrs. Varden on everything that had happened, was happening, or about to happen, within the sphere of their domestic concern; the locksmith sat himself down at the tea-table in the little back-parlor: the rosiest, cosiest, merriest, heartiest, best-contented old buck, in Great Britain or out of it.

There he sat, with his beaming eye on Mrs. V., and his shining face suffused with gladness, and his capacious waistcoat smiling in every wrinkle, and his jovial humor peeping from under the table in the very plumpness of his legs: a sight to turn the vinegar of misanthropy into purest milk of human kindness. There he sat, watching his wife as she decorated the room with flowers for the greater honor of Dolly and Joseph Willet, who had gone out walking, and for whom the tea-kettle had been singing gayly on the hob full twenty minutes, chirping as never kettle chirped before; for whom the best service of real undoubted china, patterned with divers round-faced mandarins holding up broad umbrellas, was now displayed in all its glory; to tempt whose appetites a clear, transparent, juicy ham, garnished with cool

green lettuce-leaves and fragrant cucumber, reposed upon a shady table, covered with a snow-white cloth; for whose delight, preserves and jams, crisp cakes and other pastry, short to eat, with cunning twists, and cottage loaves, and rolls of bread both white and brown, were all set forth in rich profusion; in whose youth Mrs. V. herself had grown quite young, and stood there in a gown of red and white: symmetrical in figure, buxom in bodice, ruddy in cheek and lip, faultless in ankle, laughing in face and mood, in all respects delicious to behold — there sat the locksmith among all and every these delights, the sun that shone upon them all: the centre of the system: the source of light, heat, life, and frank enjoyment in the bright household world.

And when had Dolly ever been the Dolly of that afternoon? To see how she came in arm-in-arm with Joe; and how she made an effort not to blush or seem at all confused; and how she made believe she didn't care to sit on his side of the table; and how she coaxed the locksmith in a whisper not to joke; and how her color came and went in a little restless flutter of happiness, which made her do everything wrong, and yet so charmingly wrong that it was better than right! — why, the locksmith could have looked on at this (as he mentioned to Mrs. Varden when they retired for the night) for four-and-twenty hours at a stretch, and never wished it done.

The recollections, too, with which they made merry over that long-protracted tea! The glee with which the locksmith asked Joe if he remembered that stormy night at the Maypole when he first asked after Dolly — the laugh they all had, about that night when she was going out to the party in the sedan-chair — the unmer-

ciful manner in which they rallied Mrs. Varden about putting those flowers outside that very window — the difficulty Mrs. Varden found in joining the laugh against herself, at first, and the extraordinary perception she had of the joke when she overcame it — the confidential statements of Joe concerning the precise day and hour when he was first conscious of being fond of Dolly, and Dolly's blushing admissions, half-volunteered and half extorted, as to the time from which she dated the discovery that she "didn't mind" Joe — here was an exhaustless fund of mirth and conversation!

Then, there was a great deal to be said regarding Mrs. Varden's doubts, and motherly alarms, and shrewd suspicions: and it appeared that from Mrs. Varden's penetration and extreme sagacity nothing had ever been hidden. She had known it all along. She had seen it from the first. She had always predicted it. She had been aware of it before the principals. She had said within herself (for she remembered the exact words) "that young Willet is certainly looking after our Dolly, and *I* must look after *him*." Accordingly, she had looked after him, and had observed many little circumstances (all of which she named) so exceedingly minute that nobody else could make anything out of them even now; and had, it seemed from first to last, displayed the most unbounded tact and most consummate generalship.

Of course the night when Joe *would* ride homeward by the side of the chaise, and when Mrs. Varden *would* insist upon his going back again, was not forgotten — nor the night when Dolly fainted on his name being mentioned — nor the times upon times when Mrs. Varden, ever watchful and prudent, had found her pining in her

own chamber. In short, nothing was forgotten; and everything by some means or other brought them back to the conclusion, that that was the happiest hour in all their lives; consequently, that everything must have occurred for the best, and nothing could be suggested which would have made it better.

While they were in the full glow of such discourse as this, there came a startling knock at the door, opening from the street into the workshop, which had been kept closed all day that the house might be more quiet. Joe, as in duty bound, would hear of nobody but himself going to open it; and accordingly left the room for that purpose.

It would have been odd enough, certainly, if Joe had forgotten the way to this door; and even if he had, as it was a pretty large one and stood straight before him, he could not easily have missed it. But Dolly, perhaps because she was in the flutter of spirits before mentioned, or perhaps because she thought he would not be able to open it with his one arm — she could have had no other reason — hurried out after him; and they stopped so long in the passage — no doubt owing to Joe's entreaties that she would not expose herself to the draught of July air which must infallibly come rushing in on this same door being opened — that the knock was repeated, in a yet more startling manner than before.

"Is anybody going to open that door?" cried the locksmith. "Or shall I come?"

Upon that, Dolly went running back into the parlor, all dimples and blushes; and Joe opened it with a mighty noise, and other superfluous demonstrations of being in a violent hurry.

"Well," said the locksmith, when he reappeared: "what is it? eh Joe? what are you laughing at?"

"Nothing sir. It's coming in."

"Who's coming in? what's coming in?" Mrs. Varden, as much at a loss as her husband, could only shake her head in answer to his inquiring look: so, the locksmith wheeled his chair round to command a better view of the room-door, and stared at it with his eyes wide open, and a mingled expression of curiosity and wonder shining in his jolly face.

Instead of some person or persons straightway appearing, divers remarkable sounds were heard, first in the workshop and afterwards in the little dark passage between it and the parlor, as though some unwieldy chest or heavy piece of furniture were being brought in, by an amount of human strength inadequate to the task. At length after much struggling and bumping, and bruising of the wall on both sides, the door was forced open as by a battering-ram; and the locksmith, steadily regarding what appeared beyond, smote his thigh, elevated his eyebrows, opened his mouth, and cried in a loud voice expressive of the utmost consternation: —

"Damme, if it a'n't Miggs come back!"

The young damsel whom he named no sooner heard these words, than deserting a very small boy and a very large box by which she was accompanied, and advancing with such precipitation that her bonnet flew off her head, burst into the room, clasped her hands (in which she held a pair of pattens, one in each), raised her eyes devotedly to the ceiling, and shed a flood of tears.

"The old story!" cried the locksmith, looking at her in inexpressible desperation. "She was born to be a damper, this young woman! nothing can prevent it!"

"Ho master, ho mim!" cried Miggs, "can I constrain my feelings in these here once agin united moments! Ho Mr. Warsen, here's blessedness among relations, sir! Here's forgiveness of injuries, here's amicableness!"

The locksmith looked from his wife to Dolly, and from Dolly to Joe, and from Joe to Miggs, with his eyebrows still elevated and his mouth still open. When his eyes got back to Miggs, they rested on her; fascinated.

"To think," cried Miggs with hysterical joy, "that Mr. Joe, and dear Miss Dolly, has raly come together after all as has been said and done contrary! To see them two a-settin' along with him and her, so pleasant and in all respects so affable and mild; and me not knowing of it, and not being in the ways to make no preparations for their teas. Ho what a cutting thing it is, and yet what sweet sensations is awoke within me!"

Either in clasping her hands again, or in an ecstasy of pious joy, Miss Miggs clinked her pattens after the manner of a pair of cymbals, at this juncture; and then resumed, in the softest accents:—

"And did my missis think — ho goodness, did she think — as her own Miggs, which supported her under so many trials, and understood her natur' when them as intended well but acted rough, went so deep into her feelings — did she think as her own Miggs would ever leave her? Did she think as Miggs, though she was but a servant, and knowed that servitudes was no inheritances, would forgit that she was the humble instruments as always made it comfortable between them two when they fell out, and always told master of the meekness and forgiveness of her blessed dispositions! Did she think as Miggs had no attachments! Did she think that wages was her only object!"

To none of these interrogatories, whereof every one was more pathetically delivered than the last, did Mrs. Varden answer one word: but Miggs, not at all abashed by this circumstance, turned to the small boy in attendance — her eldest nephew — son of her own married sister — born in Golden Lion Court, number twenty-sivin, and bred in the very shadow of the second bell handle on the right hand door-post — and with a plentiful use of her pocket handkerchief, addressed herself to him; requesting that on his return home he would console his parents for the loss of her, his aunt, by delivering to them a faithful statement of his having left her in the bosom of that family, with which, as his aforesaid parents well knew, her best affections were incorporated; that he would remind them that nothing less than her imperious sense of duty, and devoted attachment to her old master and missis, likewise Miss Dolly and young Mr. Joe, should ever have induced her to decline that pressing invitation which they, his parents, had, as he could testify, given her, to lodge and board with them, free of all cost and charge, for evermore; lastly, that he would help her with her box up-stairs, and then repair straight home, bearing her blessing and her strong injunctions to mingle in his prayers a supplication that he might in course of time grow up a locksmith, or a Mr. Joe, and have Mrs. Vardens, and Miss Dollys for his relations and friends.

Having brought this admonition to an end — upon which, to say the truth, the young gentleman for whose benefit it was designed, bestowed little or no heed, having to all appearance his faculties absorbed in the contemplation of the sweetmeats, — Miss Miggs signified to the company in general that they were not to be uneasy,

for she would soon return; and, with her nephew's aid, prepared to bear her wardrobe up the staircase.

"My dear," said the locksmith to his wife. "Do you desire this?"

"I desire it!" she answered. "I am astonished — I am amazed — at her audacity. Let her leave the house this moment."

Miggs hearing this, let her end of the box fall heavily to the floor, gave a very loud sniff, crossed her arms, screwed down the corners of her mouth, and cried, in an ascending scale, "Ho, good gracious!" three distinct times.

"You hear what your mistress says, my love," remarked the locksmith. "You had better go, I think. Stay; take this with you, for the sake of old service."

Miss Miggs clutched the bank-note he took from his pocket-book and held out to her; deposited it in a small red leather purse; put the purse in her pocket (displaying as she did so, a considerable portion of some under garment, made of flannel, and more black cotton stocking than is commonly seen in public); and, tossing her head, as she looked at Mrs. Varden, repeated —

"Ho, good gracious!"

"I think you said that once before, my dear," observed the locksmith.

"Times is changed, is they, mim!" cried Miggs, bridling; "you can spare me now, can you? You can keep 'em down without me? You're not in wants of any one to scold, or throw the blame upon, no longer, a'n't you, mim? I'm glad to find you've grown so independent. I wish you joy, I'm sure!"

With that she dropped a courtesy, and keeping her head erect, her ear towards Mrs. Varden, and her eye

on the rest of the company, as she alluded to them in her remarks, proceeded :

“ I’m quite delighted, I’m sure, to find sich independency, feeling sorry though, at the same time, mim, that you should have been forced into submissions when you couldn’t help yourself — he, he, he ! It must be great vexations, ’specially considering how ill you always spoke of Mr. Joe — to have him for a son-in-law at last ; and I wonder Miss Dolly can put up with him either, after being off and on for so many years with a coach-maker. But I *have* heerd say, that the coach-maker thought twice about it — he, he, he ! — and that he told a young man as was a friend of his, that he hoped he knowed better than to be drawed into that ; though she and all the family *did* pull uncommon strong ! ”

Here she paused for a reply, and receiving none, went on as before.

“ I *have* heerd say, mim, that the illness of some ladies was all pretensions, and that they could faint away, stone dead, whenever they had the inclinations so to do. Of course I never see sich cases with my own eyes — ho no ! He, he, he ! Nor master neither — ho no ! He, he, he ! I *have* heerd the neighbors make remark as some one as they was acquainted with, was a poor good-natur’d mean-spirited creetur, as went out fishing for a wife one day, and caught a Tartar. Of course I never to my knowledge see the poor person himself. Nor did you neither, mim — ho no. I wonder who it can be — don’t you, mim ? No doubt you do, mim. Ho yes. He, he, he ! ”

Again Miggs paused for a reply ; and none being offered, was so oppressed with teeming spite and spleen, that she seemed like to burst.

"I'm glad Miss Dolly can laugh," cried Miggs with a feeble titter. "I like to see folks a-laughing — so do you, mim, don't you? You was always glad to see people in spirits, wasn't you, mim? And you always did your best to keep 'em cheerful, didn't you, mim? Though there a'n't such a great deal to laugh at now, either; is there, mim? It a'n't so much of a catch, after looking out so sharp ever since she was a little chit, and costing such a deal in dress and show, to get a poor common soldier, with one arm, is it, mim? He he! I wouldn't have a husband with one arm, anyways. I would have two arms. I would have two arms, if it was me, though instead of hands they'd only got hooks at the end, like our dustman!"

Miss Miggs was about to add, and had, indeed, begun to add, that, taking them in the abstract, dustmen were far more eligible matches than soldiers, though, to be sure, when people were past choosing they must take the best they could get, and think themselves well off too; but her vexation and chagrin being of that internally bitter sort which finds no relief in words, and is aggravated to madness by want of contradiction, she could hold out no longer, and burst into a storm of sobs and tears.

In this extremity she fell on the unlucky nephew, tooth and nail, and plucking a handful of hair from his head, demanded to know how long she was to stand there -- to be insulted, and whether or no he meant to help her to carry out the box again, and if he took a pleasure in hearing his family reviled: with other inquiries of that nature; at which disgrace and provocation, the small boy, who had been all this time gradually lashed into rebellion by the sight of unattainable pastry, walked off

indignant, leaving his aunt and the box to follow at their leisure. Somehow or other, by dint of pushing and pulling, they did attain the street at last; where Miss Miggs, all blowzed with the exertion of getting there, and with her sobs and tears, sat down upon her property to rest and grieve, until she could ensnare some other youth to help her home.

“It’s a thing to laugh at, Martha, not to care for,” whispered the locksmith, as he followed his wife to the window, and good-humoredly dried her eyes. “What does it matter? You had seen your fault before. Come! Bring up Toby again, my dear; Dolly shall sing us a song; and we’ll be all the merrier for this interruption!”

CHAPTER LXXXI.

ANOTHER month had passed, and the end of August had nearly come, when Mr. Haredale stood alone in the mail-coach office at Bristol. Although but a few weeks had intervened since his conversation with Edward Chester and his niece in the locksmith's house, and he had made no change, in the mean time, in his accustomed style of dress, his appearance was greatly altered. He looked much older, and more careworn. Agitation and anxiety of mind scatter wrinkles and gray hairs with no unsparing hand; but deeper traces follow on the silent uprooting of old habits, and severing of dear, familiar ties. The affections may not be so easily wounded as the passions, but their hurts are deeper, and more lasting. He was now a solitary man, and the heart within him was dreary and lonesome.

He was not the less alone for having spent so many years in seclusion and retirement. This was no better preparation than a round of social cheerfulness: perhaps it even increased the keenness of his sensibility. He had been so dependent upon her for companionship and love; she had come to be so much a part and parcel of his existence; they had had so many cares and thoughts in common, which no one else had shared; that losing her was beginning life anew, and being required to summon up the hope and elasticity of youth, amid the doubts, distrusters, and weakened energies of age.

The effort he had made to part from her with seeming cheerfulness and hope — and they had parted only yesterday — left him the more depressed. With these feelings, he was about to revisit London for the last time, and look once more upon the walls of their old home, before turning his back upon it, forever.

The journey was a very different one, in those days, from what the present generation find it; but it came to an end, as the longest journey will, and he stood again in the streets of the metropolis. He lay at the inn where the coach stopped, and resolved, before he went to bed, that he would make his arrival known to no one; would spend but another night in London; and would spare himself the pang of parting, even with the honest locksmith.

Such conditions of the mind as that to which he was a prey when he lay down to rest, are favorable to the growth of disordered fancies, and uneasy visions. He knew this, even in the horror with which he started from his first sleep, and threw up the window to dispel it by the presence of some object, beyond the room, which had not been, as it were, the witness of his dream. But it was not a new terror of the night; it had been present to him before, in many shapes; it had haunted him in bygone times, and visited his pillow again and again. If it had been but an ugly object, a childish spectre, haunting his sleep, its return, in its old form, might have awakened a momentary sensation of fear, which, almost in the act of waking, would have passed away. This disquiet, however, lingered about him, and would yield to nothing. When he closed his eyes again, he felt it hovering near; as he slowly sunk into a slumber, he was conscious of its gathering strength and purpose, and

gradually assuming its recent shape ; when he sprang up from his bed, the same phantom vanished from his heated brain, and left him filled with a dread, against which reason and waking thought were powerless.

The sun was up, before he could shake it off. He rose late, but not refreshed, and remained within doors all that day. He had a fancy for paying his last visit to the old spot in the evening, for he had been accustomed to walk there at that season, and desired to see it under the aspect that was most familiar to him. At such an hour as would afford him time to reach it a little before sunset, he left the inn, and turned into the busy street.

He had not gone far, and was thoughtfully making his way among the noisy crowd, when he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and turning, recognized one of the waiters from the inn, who begged his pardon, but he had left his sword behind him.

"Why have you brought it to me ?" he asked, stretching out his hand, and yet not taking it from the man, but looking at him in a disturbed and agitated manner.

The man was sorry to have disoblged him, and would carry it back again. The gentleman had said that he was going a little way into the country, and that he might not return until late. The roads were not very safe for single travellers after dark ; and since the riots, gentlemen had been more careful than ever not to trust themselves unarmed in lonely places. "We thought you were a stranger, sir," he added, "and that you might believe our roads to be better than they are ; but perhaps you know them well and carry fire-arms" —

He took the sword, and putting it up at his side, thanked the man, and resumed his walk.

It was long remembered that he did this in a manner so strange, and with such a trembling hand, that the messenger stood looking after his retreating figure, doubtful whether he ought not to follow, and watch him. It was long remembered that he had been heard pacing his bedroom in the dead of the night; that the attendants had mentioned to each other in the morning, how fevered and how pale he looked; and that when this man went back to the inn, he told a fellow-servant that what he had observed in this short interview lay very heavy on his mind, and that he feared the gentleman intended to destroy himself, and would never come back alive.

With a half consciousness that his manner had attracted the man's attention (remembering the expression of his face when they parted), Mr. Haredale quickened his steps; and arriving at a stand of coaches, bargained with the driver of the best to carry him so far on his road as the point where the footway struck across the fields, and to await his return at a house of entertainment which was within a stone's-throw of that place. Arriving there in due course, he alighted and pursued his way on foot.

He passed so near the Maypole, that he could see its smoke rising from among the trees, while a flock of pigeons — some of its old inhabitants, doubtless — sailed gayly home to roost, between him and the unclouded sky. "The old house will brighten up now," he said, as he looked towards it, "and there will be a merry fireside beneath its ivied roof. It is some comfort to know that everything will not be blighted hereabouts. I shall be glad to have one picture of life and cheerfulness to turn to, in my mind!"

He resumed his walk, and bent his steps towards the Warren. It was a clear, calm, silent evening, with hardly a breath of wind to stir the leaves, or any sound to break the stillness of the time, but drowsy sheep-bells tinkling in the distance, and, at intervals, the far-off lowing of cattle, or bark of village-dogs. The sky was radiant with the softened glory of sunset; and on the earth, and in the air, a deep repose prevailed. At such an hour he arrived at the deserted mansion which had been his home so long, and looked for the last time upon its blackened walls.

The ashes of the commonest fire are melancholy things, for in them there is an image of death and ruin, — of something that has been bright, and is but dull, cold, dreary dust, — with which our nature forces us to sympathize. How much more sad the crumbled embers of a home; the casting down of that great altar, where the worst among us sometimes perform the worship of the heart; and where the best have offered up such sacrifices, and done such deeds of heroism, as, chronicled, would put the proudest temples of old Time, with all their vaunting annals, to the blush.

He roused himself from a long train of meditation, and walked slowly round the house. It was by this time almost dark.

He had nearly made the circuit of the building, when he uttered a half-suppressed exclamation, started, and stood still. Reclining, in an easy attitude, with his back against a tree, and contemplating the ruin with an expression of pleasure, — a pleasure so keen that it overcame his habitual indolence and command of feature, and displayed itself utterly free from all restraint or reserve, — before him, on his own ground, and

triumphing then, as he had triumphed in every misfortune and disappointment of his life, stood the man whose presence, of all mankind, in any place, and least of all in that, he could the least endure.

Although his blood so rose against this man, and his wrath so stirred within him, that he could have struck him dead, he put such fierce constraint upon himself that he passed him without a word or look. Yes, and he would have gone on, and not turned, though to resist the Devil who poured such hot temptation in his brain, required an effort scarcely to be achieved, if this man had not himself summoned him to stop : and that, with an assumed compassion in his voice which drove him wellnigh mad, and in an instant routed all the self-command it had been anguish — acute, poignant anguish — to sustain.

All consideration, reflection, mercy, forbearance ; everything by which a goaded man can curb his rage and passion ; fled from him as he turned back. And yet he said, slowly and quite calmly — far more calmly than he had ever spoken to him before :

“ Why have you called to me ? ”

“ To remark,” said Sir John Chester with his wonted composure, “ what an odd chance it is, that we should meet here ! ”

“ It *is* a strange chance.”

“ Strange ? The most remarkable and singular thing in the world. I never ride in the evening ; I have not done so for years. The whim seized me, quite unaccountably, in the middle of last night. — How very picturesque this is ! ” — He pointed, as he spoke, to the dismantled house, and raised his glass to his eye.

“ You praise your own work very freely.”

Sir John let fall his glass; inclined his face towards him with an air of the most courteous inquiry; and slightly shook his head as though he were remarking to himself, "I fear this animal is going mad!"

"I say you praise your own work very freely," repeated Mr. Haredale.

"Work!" echoed Sir John, looking smilingly round. "Mine! — I beg your pardon, I really beg your pardon" —

"Why, you see," said Mr. Haredale, "those walls. You see those tottering gables. You see on every side where fire and smoke have raged. You see the destruction that has been wanton here. Do you not!"

"My good friend," returned the knight, gently checking his impatience with his hand, "of course I do. I see everything you speak of, when you stand aside, and do not interpose yourself between the view and me. I am very sorry for you. If I had not had the pleasure to meet you here, I think I should have written to tell you so. But you don't bear it as well as I had expected — excuse me — no, you don't indeed."

He pulled out his snuff-box, and addressing him with the superior air of a man who, by reason of his higher nature, has a right to read a moral lesson to another, continued:

"For you are a philosopher, you know — one of that stern and rigid school who are far above the weaknesses of mankind in general. You are removed, a long way, from the frailties of the crowd. You contemplate them from a height, and rail at them with a most impressive bitterness. I have heard you."

— "And shall again," said Mr. Haredale.

"Thank you," returned the other. "Shall we walk

as we talk? The damp falls rather heavily. Well,—as you please. But I grieve to say that I can spare you only a very few moments.”

“I would,” said Mr. Haredale, “you had spared me none. I would, with all my soul, you had been in Paradise (if such a monstrous lie could be enacted), rather than here to-night.”

“Nay,” returned the other — “really — you do yourself injustice. You are a rough companion, but I would not go so far to avoid you.”

“Listen to me,” said Mr. Haredale. “Listen to me.”

“While you rail?” inquired Sir John.

“While I deliver your infamy. You urged and stimulated to do your work a fit agent, but one who in his nature — in the very essence of his being — is a traitor, and who has been false to you (despite the sympathy you two should have together) as he has been to all others. With hints, and looks, and crafty words, which told again are nothing, you set on Gashford to this work — this work before us now. With these same hints, and looks, and crafty words, which told again are nothing, you urged him on to gratify the deadly hate he owes me — I have earned it, I thank Heaven — by the abduction and dishonor of my niece. You did. I see denial in your looks,” he cried, abruptly pointing in his face, and stepping back, “and denial is a lie !”

He had his hand upon his sword; but the knight, with a contemptuous smile, replied to him as coldly as before.

“You will take notice, sir — if you can discriminate sufficiently — that I have taken the trouble to deny nothing. Your discernment is hardly fine enough for the perusal of faces, not of a kind as coarse as your speech; nor has it ever been, that I remember; or, in

one face that I could name, you would have read indifference, not to say disgust, somewhat sooner than you did. I speak of a long time ago, — but you understand me.”

“Disguise it as you will, you mean denial. Denial explicit or reserved, expressed or left to be inferred, is still a lie. You say you don’t deny. Do you admit?”

“You yourself,” returned Sir John, suffering the current of his speech to flow as smoothly as if it had been stemmed by no one word of interruption, “publicly proclaimed the character of the gentleman in question (I think it was in Westminster Hall) in terms which relieve me from the necessity of making any further allusion to him. You may have been warranted; you may not have been; I can’t say. Assuming the gentleman to be what you described, and to have made to you or any other person any statements that may have happened to suggest themselves to him, for the sake of his own security, or for the sake of money, or for his own amusement, or for any other consideration, — I have nothing to say of him, except that his extremely degrading situation appears to me to be shared with his employers. You are so very plain yourself that you will excuse a little freedom in me, I am sure.”

“Attend to me again, Sir John — but once,” cried Mr. Haredale; “in your every look, and word, and gesture, you tell me this was not your act. I tell you that it was, and that you tampered with the man I speak of, and with your wretched son (whom God forgive!) to do this deed. You talk of degradation and character. You told me once that you had purchased the absence of the poor idiot and his mother, when (as I have discovered since, and then suspected) you had gone to tempt them,

and had found them flown. To you I traced the insinuation that I alone reaped any harvest from my brother's death; and all the foul attacks and whispered calumnies that followed in its train. In every action of my life, from that first hope which you converted into grief and desolation, you have stood, like an adverse fate, between me and peace. In all, you have ever been the same cold-blooded, hollow, false, unworthy villain. For the second time, and for the last, I cast these charges in **your** teeth, and spurn you from me as I would a faithless dog!"

With that, he raised his arm, and struck him on the breast so that he staggered. Sir John, the instant he recovered, drew his sword, threw away the scabbard and his bat, and running on his adversary, made a desperate lunge at his heart, which, but that his guard was quick and true, would have stretched him dead upon the grass.

In the act of striking him, the torrent of his opponent's rage had reached a stop. He parried his rapid thrusts, without returning them, and called to him, with a frantic kind of terror in his face, to keep back.

"Not to-night! not to-night!" he cried. "In God's name, not to-night!"

Seeing that he lowered his weapon, and that he would not thrust in turn, Sir John lowered his.

"Not to-night!" his adversary cried. "Be warned in time!"

"You told me — it must have been in a sort of inspiration" — said Sir John, quite deliberately, though now he dropped his mask, and showed his hatred in his face, "that this was the last time. Be assured it is! Did you believe our last meeting was forgotten? Did you believe that your every word and look was not to be ac-

counted for, and was not well remembered? Do you believe that I have waited your time, or you mine? What kind of man is he who entered, with all his sickening cant of honesty and truth, into a bond with me to prevent a marriage he affected to dislike, and when I had redeemed my part to the spirit and the letter, kulked from his, and brought the match about in his own time, to rid himself of a burden he had grown tired of, and cast a spurious lustre on his house?"

"I have acted," cried Mr. Haredale, "with honor and in good faith. I do so now. Do not force me to renew this duel to-night!"

"You said my 'wretched' son, I think?" said Sir John, with a smile. "Poor fool! The dupe of such a shallow knave — trapped into marriage by such an uncle and by such a niece — he well deserves your pity. But he is no longer a son of mine: you are welcome to the prize your craft has made, sir."

"Once more," cried his opponent, wildly stamping on the ground, "although you tear me from my better angel, I implore you not to come within the reach of my sword to-night. Oh! why were you here at all! Why have we met! To-morrow would have cast us far apart forever!"

"That being the case," returned Sir John, without the least emotion, "it is very fortunate we have met to-night. Haredale, I have always despised you, as you know, but I have given you credit for a species of brute courage. For the honor of my judgment, which I had thought a good one, I am sorry to find you a coward."

Not another word was spoken on either side. They crossed swords, though it was now quite dusk, and attacked each other fiercely. They were well matched,

and each was thoroughly skilled in the management of his weapon.

After a few seconds they grew hotter and more furious, and pressing on each other inflicted and received several slight wounds. It was directly after receiving one of these in his arm, that Mr. Haredale, making a keener thrust as he felt the warm blood spirting out, plunged his sword through his opponent's body to the hilt.

Their eyes met, and were on each other as he drew it out. He put his arm about the dying man, who repulsed him, feebly, and dropped upon the turf. Raising himself upon his hands, he gazed at him for an instant, with scorn and hatred in his look; but, seeming to remember, even then, that this expression would distort his features after death, he tried to smile, and, faintly moving his right hand, as if to hide his bloody linen in his vest, fell back dead — the phantom of last night.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

A PARTING glance at such of the actors in this little history as it has not, in the course of its events, dismissed, will bring it to an end.

Mr. Haredale fled that night. Before pursuit could be begun, indeed before Sir John was traced or missed, he had left the kingdom. Repairing straight to a religious establishment, known throughout Europe for the rigor and severity of its discipline, and for the merciless penitence it exacted from those who sought its shelter as a refuge from the world, he took the vows which thenceforth shut him out from nature and his kind, and after a few remorseful years was buried in its gloomy cloisters.

Two days elapsed before the body of Sir John was found. As soon as it was recognized and carried home, the faithful valet, true to his master's creed, eloped with all the cash and movables he could lay his hands on, and started as a finished gentleman upon his own account. In this career he met with great success, and would certainly have married an heiress in the end, but for an unlucky check which led to his premature decease. He sank under a contagious disorder, very prevalent at that time, and vulgarly termed the jail fever.

Lord George Gordon, remaining in his prison in the Tower until Monday the fifth of February in the following year, was on that day solemnly tried at Westminster for High Treason. Of this crime he was, after a patient

investigation, declared Not Guilty; upon the ground that there was no proof of his having called the multitude together with any traitorous or unlawful intentions. Yet so many people were there, still, to whom those riots taught no lesson of reproof or moderation, that a public subscription was set on foot in Scotland to defray the cost of his defence.

For seven years afterwards he remained, at the strong intercession of his friends, comparatively quiet; saving that he, every now and then, took occasion to display his zeal for the Protestant faith in some extravagant proceeding which was the delight of its enemies; and saving, besides, that he was formally excommunicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, for refusing to appear as a witness in the Ecclesiastical Court when cited for that purpose. In the year 1788 he was stimulated by some new insanity to write and publish an injurious pamphlet, reflecting on the Queen of France, in very violent terms. Being indicted for the libel, and (after various strange demonstrations in court) found guilty, he fled into Holland in place of appearing to receive sentence: from whence, as the quiet burgomasters of Amsterdam had no relish for his company, he was sent home again with all speed. Arriving in the month of July at Harwich, and going thence to Birmingham, he made, in the latter place, in August, a public profession of the Jewish religion; and figured there as a Jew until he was arrested, and brought back to London to receive the sentence he had evaded. By virtue of this sentence he was, in the month of December, cast into Newgate for five years and ten months, and required besides to pay a large fine, and to furnish heavy securities for his future good behavior.

After addressing, in the midsummer of the following year, an appeal to the commiseration of the National Assembly of France, which the English minister refused to sanction, he composed himself to undergo his full term of punishment; and suffering his beard to grow nearly to his waist, and conforming in all respects to the ceremonies of his new religion, he applied himself to the study of history, and occasionally to the art of painting, in which, in his younger days, he had shown some skill. Deserted by his former friends, and treated in all respects like the worst criminal in the jail, he lingered on, quite cheerful and resigned, until the 1st of November, 1793, when he died in his cell, being then only three-and-forty years of age.

Many men with fewer sympathies for the distressed and needy, with less abilities and harder hearts, have made a shining figure and left a brilliant fame. He had his mourners. The prisoners bemoaned his loss, and missed him; for though his means were not large his charity was great, and in bestowing alms among them he considered the necessities of all alike, and knew no distinction of sect or creed. There are wise men in the highways of the world who may learn something, even from this poor crazy lord who died in Newgate.

To the last, he was truly served by bluff John Grueby. John was at his side before he had been four-and-twenty hours in the Tower, and never left him until he died. He had one other constant attendant, in the person of a beautiful Jewish girl; who attached herself to him from feelings half religious, half romantic, but whose virtuous and disinterested character appears to have been beyond the censure even of the most censorious.

Gashford deserted him, of course. He subsisted for a

time upon his traffic in his master's secrets; and, this trade failing when the stock was quite exhausted, procured an appointment in the honorable corps of spies and eaves-droppers employed by the government. As one of these wretched underlings, he did his drudgery, sometimes abroad, sometimes at home, and long endured the various miseries of such a station. Ten or a dozen years ago — not more — a meagre, wan old man, diseased and miserably poor, was found dead in his bed at an obscure inn in the Borough, where he was quite unknown. He had taken poison. There was no clew to his name; but it was discovered from certain entries in a pocket-book he carried, that he had been secretary to Lord George Gordon in the time of the famous riots.

Many months after the reëstablishment of peace and order, and even when it had ceased to be the town talk, that every military officer, kept at free quarters by the city during the late alarms, had cost for his board and lodging four pounds four per day, and every private soldier two and twopence half-penny; many months after even this engrossing topic was forgotten, and the United Bull-Dogs were to a man all killed, imprisoned or transported, Mr. Simon Tappertit, being removed from a hospital to prison, and thence to his place of trial, was discharged by proclamation, on two wooden legs. Shorn of his graceful limbs, and brought down from his high estate to circumstances of utter destitution, and the deepest misery, he made shift to stump back to his old master, and beg for some relief. By the locksmith's advice and aid, he was established in business as a shoe-black, and opened shop under an archway near the Horse Guards. This being a central quarter, he quickly made a very

large connection; and on levee days, was sometimes known to have as many as twenty half-pay officers waiting their turn for polishing. Indeed his trade increased to that extent, that in course of time he entertained no less than two apprentices, besides taking for his wife the widow of an eminent bone and rag-collector, formerly of Millbank. With this lady (who assisted in the business) he lived in great domestic happiness, only checkered by those little storms which serve to clear the atmosphere of wedlock, and brighten its horizon. In some of these gusts of bad weather, Mr. Tappertit would, in the assertion of his prerogative, so far forget himself as to correct his lady with a brush, or boot, or shoe; while she (but only in extreme cases) would retaliate by taking off his legs, and leaving him exposed to the derision of those urchins who delight in mischief.

Miss Miggs, baffled in all her schemes, matrimonial and otherwise, and cast upon a thankless, undeserving world, turned very sharp and sour; and did at length become so acid, and did so pinch and slap and tweak the hair and noses of the youth of Golden Lion Court, that she was by one consent expelled that sanctuary, and desired to bless some other spot of earth, in preference. It chanced at that moment, that the justices of the peace for Middlesex proclaimed by public placard that they stood in need of a female turnkey for the County Bridewell, and appointed a day and hour for the inspection of candidates. Miss Miggs, attending at the time appointed, was instantly chosen and selected from one hundred and twenty-four competitors, and at once promoted to the office; which she held until her decease, more than thirty years afterwards, remaining single all that time. It was observed of this lady that while she was inflexi-

ble and grim to all her female flock, she was particularly so to those who could establish any claim to beauty ; and it was often remarked as a proof of her indomitable virtue and severe chastity, that to such as had been frail she showed no mercy ; always falling upon them on the slightest occasion, or on no occasion at all, with the fullest measure of her wrath. Among other useful inventions which she practised upon this class of offenders and bequeathed to posterity, was the art of inflicting an exquisitely vicious poke or dig with the wards of a key in the small of the back, near the spine. She likewise originated a mode of treading by accident (in pattens) on such as had small feet ; also very remarkable for its ingenuity, and previously quite unknown.

It was not very long, you may be sure, before Joe Willet and Dolly Varden were made husband and wife, and with a handsome sum in bank (for the locksmith could afford to give his daughter a good dowry), reopened the Maypole. It was not very long, you may be sure, before a red-faced little boy was seen staggering about the Maypole passage, and kicking up his heels on the green before the door. It was not very long, counting by years, before there was a red-faced little girl, another red-faced little boy, and a whole troop of girls and boys : so that, go to Chigwell when you would, there would surely be seen, either in the village street, or on the green, or frolicking in the farm-yard — for it was a *arm* now, as well as a tavern — more small Joes and small Dollys than could be easily counted. It was not a very long time before these appearances ensued ; but it *was a very* long time before Joe looked five years older, or Dolly either, or the locksmith either, or his wife either : for cheerfulness and content are great beauti-

fiers, and are famous preservers of youthful looks, depend upon it.

It was a long time, too, before there was such a country inn as the Maypole, in all England; indeed it is a great question whether there has ever been such another to this hour, or ever will be. It was a long time too — for Never, as the proverb says, is a long day — before they forgot to have an interest in wounded soldiers at the Maypole; or before Joe omitted to refresh them, for the sake of his old campaign; or before the sergeant left off looking in there, now and then; or before they fatigued themselves, or each other, by talking on these occasions of battles and sieges, and hard weather and hard service, and a thousand things belonging to a soldier's life. As to the great silver snuff-box which the King sent Joe with his own hand, because of his conduct in the Riots, what guest ever went to the Maypole without putting finger and thumb into that box, and taking a great pinch, though he had never taken a pinch of snuff before, and almost sneezed himself into convulsions even then? As to the purple-faced vintner, where is the man who lived in those times and never saw *him* at the Maypole: to all appearance as much at home in the best room, as if he lived there? And as to the feastings and christenings and revellings at Christmas, and celebrations of birthdays, wedding-days, and all manner of days, both at the Maypole and the Golden Key, — if they are not notorious, what facts are?

Mr. Willet the elder, having been by some extraordinary means possessed with the idea that Joe wanted to be married, and that it would be well for him, his father, to retire into private life, and enable him to live in comfort, took up his abode in a small cottage at Chigwell;

where they widened and enlarged the fire-place for him, hung up the boiler, and furthermore planted in the little garden outside the front-door, a fictitious Maypole: so that he was quite at home directly. To this his new habitation, Tom Cobb, Phil Parkes, and Solomon Daisy went regularly every night: and in the chimney-corner, they all four quaffed, and smoked, and prosed, and dozed, as they had done of old. It being accidentally discovered after a short time that Mr. Willet still appeared to consider himself a landlord by profession, Joe provided him with a slate, upon which the old man regularly scored up vast accounts for meat, drink, and tobacco. As he grew older this passion increased upon him; and it became his delight to chalk against the name of each of his cronies a sum of enormous magnitude, and impossible to be paid: and such was his secret joy in these entries, that he would be perpetually seen going behind the door to look at them, and coming forth again, suffused with the liveliest satisfaction.

He never recovered the surprise the Rioters had given him, and remained in the same mental condition down to the last moment of his life. It was like to have been brought to a speedy termination by the first sight of his first grandchild, which appeared to fill him with the belief that some alarming miracle had happened to Joe. Being promptly blooded, however, by a skilful surgeon, he rallied; and although the doctors all agreed, on his being attacked with symptoms of apoplexy six months afterwards, that he ought to die, and took it very ill that he did not, he remained alive — possibly on account of his constitutional slowness — for nearly seven years more, when he was one morning found speechless in his bed. He lay in this state, free from all tokens of un-

easiness, for a whole week, when he was suddenly restored to consciousness by hearing the nurse whisper in his son's ear that he was going. "I'm a-going, Joseph," said Mr. Willet, turning round upon the instant, "to the Salvanners" — and immediately gave up the ghost.

He left a large sum of money behind him; even more than he was supposed to have been worth, although the neighbors, according to the custom of mankind in calculating the wealth that other people ought to have saved, had estimated his property in good round numbers. Joe inherited the whole; so that he became a man of great consequence in those parts, and was perfectly independent.

Some time elapsed before Barnaby got the better of the shock he had sustained, or regained his old health and gayety. But he recovered by degrees: and although he could never separate his condemnation and escape from the idea of a terrific dream, he became, in other respects, more rational. Dating from the time of his recovery, he had a better memory and greater steadiness of purpose; but a dark cloud overhung his whole previous existence, and never cleared away.

He was not the less happy for this; for his love of freedom and interest in all that moved or grew, or had its being in the elements, remained to him unimpaired. He lived with his mother on the Maypole farm, tending the poultry and the cattle, working in a garden of his own, and helping everywhere. He was known to every bird and beast about the place, and had a name for every one. Never was there a lighter-hearted husbandman, a creature more popular with young and old, a blither or more happy soul than Barnaby; and though he was free

to ramble where he would, he never quitted Her, but was for evermore her stay and comfort.

It was remarkable that although he had that dim sense of the past, he sought out Hugh's dog, and took him under his care; and that he never could be tempted into London. When the Riots were many years old, and Edward and his wife came back to England with a family almost as numerous as Dolly's, and one day appeared at the Maypole porch, he knew them instantly, and wept and leaped for joy. But neither to visit them, nor on any other pretence, no matter how full of promise and enjoyment, could he be persuaded to set foot in the streets: nor did he ever conquer his repugnance or look upon the town again.

Grip soon recovered his looks, and became as glossy and sleek as ever. But he was profoundly silent. Whether he had forgotten the art of Polite Conversation in Newgate, or had made a vow in those troubled times to forego, for a period, the display of his accomplishments, is matter of uncertainty; but certain it is that for a whole year he never indulged in any other sound than a grave, decorous croak. At the expiration of that term the morning being very bright and sunny, he was heard to address himself to the horses in the stable, upon the subject of the Kettle, so often mentioned in these pages; and before the witness who overheard him could run into the house with the intelligence, and add to it upon his solemn affirmation the statement that he had heard him laugh, the bird himself advanced with fantastic steps to the very door of the bar, and there cried "I'm a devil, I'm a devil, I'm a devil!" with extraordinary rapture.

From that period (although he was supposed to be

much affected by the death of Mr. Willet senior), he constantly practised and improved himself in the vulgar tongue; and as he was a mere infant for a raven when Barnaby was gray, he has very probably gone on talking to the present time.

THE END.

SKETCHES BY BOZ.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

EVERY-DAY LIFE AND EVERY-DAY PEOPLE

VOLUME II.

SKETCHES BY BOZ.

CHARACTERS.

(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER IX.

THE DANCING ACADEMY.

OF all the dancing academies that ever were established, there never was one more popular in its immediate vicinity than Signor Billsmethi's, of the "King's Theatre." It was not in Spring Gardens, or Newinan Street, or Berners Street, or Gower Street, or Charlotte Street, or Percy Street, or any other of the numerous streets which have been devoted time out of mind to professional people, dispensaries, and boarding-houses; it was not in the West End at all — it rather approximated to the eastern portion of London, being situated in the populous and improving neighborhood of Gray's Inn Lane. It was not a dear dancing academy — four-and-sixpence a quarter is decidedly cheap upon the whole. It was *very* select, the number of pupils being strictly limited to seventy-five, and a quarter's payment in advance being rigidly exacted. There was public tuition and private tuition — an assembly-room and a parlor. Signor Billsmethi's family were always thrown in with the parlor, and included in parlor price; that is to say, a private pupil had Signor Billsmethi's parlor to

dance *in*, and Signor Billsmethi's family to dance *with*; and when he had been sufficiently broken in in the parlor, he began to run in couples in the Assembly-room.

Such was the dancing academy of Signor Billsmethi, when Mr. Augustus Cooper, of Fetter Lane, first saw an unstamped advertisement walking leisurely down Holborn Hill, announcing to the world that Signor Billsmethi, of the King's Theatre, intended opening for the season with a Grand Ball.

Now, Mr. Augustus Cooper was in the oil and color line — just of age, with a little money, a little business, and a little mother, who having managed her husband and *his* business in his lifetime took to managing her son and *his* business after 'his decease; and so, somehow or other, he had been cooped up in the little back-parlor behind the shop on week days, and in a little deal box without a lid (called by courtesy a pew) at Bethel Chapel, on Sundays, and had seen no more of the world than if he had been an infant all his days; whereas Young White, at the Gas-fitter's over the way, three years younger than him, had been flaring away like winkin' — going to the theatre — supping at harmonic meetings — eating oysters by the barrel — drinking stout by the gallon — even stopping out all night, and coming home as cool in the morning as if nothing had happened. So Mr. Augustus Cooper made up his mind that he would not stand it any longer, and had that very morning expressed to his mother a firm determination to be "blowed," in the event of his not being instantly provided with a street-door key. And he was walking down Holborn Hill, thinking about all these things, and wondering how he could manage to get introduced into genteel society for the first time, when his eyes rested on

Signor Billsmethi's announcement, which it immediately struck him was just the very thing he wanted; for he should not only be able to select a genteel circle of acquaintance at once, out of the five-and-seventy pupils at four-and-sixpence a quarter, but should qualify himself at the same time to go through a hornpipe in private society, with perfect ease to himself, and great delight to his friends. So, he stopped the unstamped advertisement — an animated sandwich, composed of a boy between two boards — and having procured a very small card with the Signor's address indented thereon, walked straight at once to the Signor's house — and very fast he walked too, for fear the list should be filled up, and the five-and-seventy completed, before he got there. The Signor was at home, and, what was still more gratifying, he was an Englishman! Such a nice man — and so polite! The list was not full, but it was a most extraordinary circumstance that there was only just one vacancy, and even that one would have been filled up, that very morning, only Signor Billsmethi was dissatisfied with the reference, and, being very much afraid that the lady wasn't select, wouldn't take her.

"And very much delighted I am, Mr. Cooper," said Signor Billsmethi, "that I did *not* take her. I assure you, Mr. Cooper — I don't say it to flatter you, for I know you're above it — that I consider myself extremely fortunate in having a gentleman of your manners and appearance, sir."

"I am very glad of it too, sir," said Augustus Cooper.

"And I hope we shall be better acquainted, sir," said Signor Billsmethi.

"And I'm sure I hope we shall too, sir," responded Augustus Cooper. Just then, the door opened, and in

came a young lady, with her hair curled in a crop all over her head, and her shoes tied in sandals all over her ankles.

"Don't run away, my dear," said Signor Billsmethi; for the young lady didn't know Mr. Cooper was there when she ran in, and was going to run out again in her modesty, all in confusion-like. "Don't run away, my dear," said Signor Billsmethi, "this is Mr. Cooper — Mr. Cooper, of Fetter Lane. Mr. Cooper, my daughter, sir — Miss Billsmethi, sir, who I hope will have the pleasure of dancing many a quadrille, minuet, gavotte, country-dance, fandango, double hornpipe, and farinaghokajingo with you, sir. She dances them all, sir; and so shall you, sir, before you're a quarter older, sir."

And Signor Billsmethi slapped Mr. Augustus Cooper on the back, as if he had known him a dozen years, — so friendly; — and Mr. Cooper bowed to the young lady, and the young lady courtesied to him, and Signor Billsmethi said they were as handsome a pair as ever he'd wish to see; upon which the young lady exclaimed, "Lor, pa!" and blushed as red as Mr. Cooper himself — you might have thought they were both standing under a red lamp at a chemist's shop; and before Mr. Cooper went away it was settled that he should join the family circle that very night — taking them just as they were — no ceremony nor nonsense of that kind — and learn his positions, in order that he might lose no time, and be able to come out at the forthcoming ball.

Well; Mr. Augustus Cooper went away to one of the cheap shoemakers' shops in Holborn, where gentlemen's dress-pumps are seven-and-sixpence, and men's strong walking just nothing at all, and bought a pair of the regular seven-and-sixpenny, long-quartered town-mades,



in which he astonished himself quite as much as his mother, and sallied forth to Signor Billsmethi's. There were four other private pupils in the parlor: two ladies and two gentlemen. Such nice people! Not a bit of pride about them. One of the ladies in particular, who was in training for a Columbine, was remarkably affable; and she and Miss Billsmethi took such an interest in Mr. Augustus Cooper, and joked and smiled, and looked so bewitching, that he got quite at home, and learnt his steps in no time. After the practising was over, Signor Billsmethi, and Miss Billsmethi, and Master Billsmethi, and a young lady, and the two ladies, and the two gentlemen, danced a quadrille — none of your slipping and sliding about, but regular warm work, flying into corners, and diving among chairs, and shooting out at the door, — something like dancing! Signor Billsmethi in particular, notwithstanding his having a little fiddle to play all the time, was out on the landing every figure, and Master Billsmethi, when everybody else was breathless, danced a hornpipe, with a cane in his hand, and a cheese-plate on his head, to the unqualified admiration of the whole company. Then, Signor Billsmethi insisted as they were so happy, that they should all stay to supper, and proposed sending Master Billsmethi for the beer and spirits, whereupon the two gentlemen swore, "strike 'em vulgar if they'd stand that;" and were just going to quarrel who should pay for it, when Mr. Augustus Cooper said he would, if they'd have the kindness to allow him — and they *had* the kindness to allow him; and Master Billsmethi brought the beer in a can, and the rum in a quart-pot. They had a regular night of it; and Miss Billsmethi squeezed Mr. Augustus Cooper's hand under the table; and Mr. Augustus Cooper re-

turned the squeeze and returned home too, at something to six o'clock in the morning, when he was put to bed by main force by the apprentice, after repeatedly expressing an uncontrollable desire to pitch his revered parent out of the second-floor window, and to throttle the apprentice with his own neck-handkerchief.

Weeks had worn on, and the seven-and-sixpenny town-mades had nearly worn out, when the night arrived for the grand dress-ball at which the whole of the five-and-seventy pupils were to meet together, for the first time that season, and to take out some portion of their respective four-and-sixpences in lamp-oil and fiddlers. Mr. Augustus Cooper had ordered a new coat for the occasion — a two-pound-tenner from Turnstile. It was his first appearance in public; and, after a grand Sicilian shawl-dance by fourteen young ladies in character, he was to open the quadrille department with Miss Billsmethi herself, with whom he had become quite intimate since his first introduction. It *was* a night! Everything was admirably arranged. The sandwich-boy took the hats and bonnets at the street-door; there was a turn-up bedstead in the back parlor, on which Miss Billsmethi made tea and coffee for such of the gentlemen as chose to pay for it, and such of the ladies as the gentlemen treated; red port-wine negus and lemonade were handed round at eighteen-pence a head; and in pursuance of a previous engagement with the public-house at the corner of the street, an extra pot-boy was laid on for the occasion. In short, nothing could exceed the arrangements, except the company. Such ladies! Such pink silk stockings! Such artificial flowers! Such a number of cabs! No sooner had one cab set down a couple of ladies, than another cab drove up and set down another couple of

ladies, and they all knew : not only one another, but the majority of the gentlemen into the bargain, which made it all as pleasant and lively as could be. Signor Bill smethi, in black tights, with a large blue bow in his buttonhole, introduced the ladies to such of the gentlemen as were strangers : and the ladies talked away — and laughed they did — it was delightful to see them.

As to the shawl-dance, it was the most exciting thing that ever was beheld ; there was such a whisking, and rustling, and fanning, and getting ladies into a tangle with artificial flowers, and then disentangling them again ! And as to Mr. Augustus Cooper's share in the quadrille, he got through it admirably. He was missing from his partner, now and then, certainly, and discovered on such occasions to be either dancing with laudable perseverance in another set, or sliding about in perspective, without any definite object ; but generally speaking, they managed to shove him through the figure, until he turned up in the right place. Be this as it may, when he had finished, a great many ladies and gentlemen came up and complimented him very much, and said they had never seen a beginner do anything like it before ; and Mr. Augustus Cooper was perfectly satisfied with himself, and everybody else into the bargain ; and “ stood ” considerable quantities of spirits-and-water, negus, and compounds, for the use and behoof of two or three dozen very particular friends, selected from the select circle of five-and-seventy pupils.

Now, whether it was the strength of the compounds, or the beauty of the ladies, or what not, it did so happen that Mr. Augustus Cooper encouraged, rather than repelled, the very flattering attentions of a young lady in brown gauze over white calico who had appeared partic-

ularly struck with him from the first ; and when the encouragements had been prolonged for some time, Miss Billsmethi betrayed her spite and jealousy thereat by calling the young lady in brown gauze a "creeter," which induced the young lady in brown gauze to retort, in certain sentences containing a taunt founded on the payment of four-and-sixpence a quarter, which reference Mr. Augustus Cooper, being then and there in a state of considerable bewilderment, expressed his entire concurrence in. Miss Billsmethi, thus renounced, forthwith began screaming in the loudest key of her voice, at the rate of fourteen screams a minute ; and being unsuccessful, in an onslaught on the eyes and face, first of the lady in gauze and then of Mr. Augustus Cooper, called distractedly on the other three-and-seventy pupils to furnish her with oxalic acid for her own private drinking ; and, the call not being honored, made another rush at Mr. Cooper, and then had her stay-lace cut, and was carried off to bed. Mr. Augustus Cooper, not being remarkable for quickness of apprehension, was at a loss to understand what all this meant, until Signor Billsmethi explained it in a most satisfactory manner, by stating to the pupils that Mr. Augustus Cooper had made and confirmed divers promises of marriage to his daughter on divers occasions, and had now basely deserted her ; on which, the indignation of the pupils became universal ; and as several chivalrous gentlemen inquired rather pressinglly of Mr. Augustus Cooper, whether he required anything for his own use, or, in other words, whether he "wanted anything for himself," he deemed it prudent to make a precipitate retreat. And the upshot of the matter was, that a lawyer's letter came next day, and an action was commenced next week ; and that Mr. Augustus

tus Cooper, after walking twice to the Serpentine for the purpose of drowning himself, and coming twice back without doing it, made a confidante of his mother, who compromised the matter with twenty pounds from the till : which made twenty pounds four shillings and sixpence paid to Signor Billsmethi, exclusive of treats and pumps. And Mr. Augustus Cooper went back and lived with his mother, and there he lives to this day ; and as he has lost his ambition for society, and never goes into the world, he will never see this account of himself, and will never be any the wiser.

CHAPTER X.

SHABBY-GENTEEL PEOPLE.

THERE are certain descriptions of people who, oddly enough, appear to appertain exclusively to the metropolis. You meet them, every day, in the streets of London, but no one ever encounters them elsewhere ; they seem indigenous to the soil, and to belong as exclusively to London as its own smoke, or the dingy bricks and mortar. We could illustrate the remark by a variety of examples, but, in our present sketch, we will only advert to one class as a specimen — that class which is so aptly and expressively designated as “shabby-genteel.”

Now, shabby people, God knows, may be found anywhere, and genteel people are not articles of greater scarcity out of London than in it ; but this compound of the two — this shabby-gentility — is as purely local

as the statue at Charing Cross, or the pump at Aldgate. It is worthy of remark, too, that only men are shabby-genteel; a woman is always either dirty and slovenly in the extreme, or neat and respectable, however poverty-stricken in appearance. A very poor man, "who has seen better days," as the phrase goes, is a strange compound of dirty slovenliness and wretched attempts at faded smartness.

We will endeavor to explain our conception of the term which forms the title of this paper. If you meet a man, lounging up Drury Lane, or leaning with his back against a post in Long Acre, with his hands in the pockets of a pair of drab trousers plentifully besprinkled with grease-spots: the trousers made very full over the boots, and ornamented with two cords down the outside of each leg — wearing, also, what has been a brown coat with bright buttons, and a hat very much pinched up at the sides, cocked over his right eye — don't pity him. He is not shabby-genteel. The "harmonic meetings" at some fourth-rate public-house, or the purlieus of a private theatre, are his chosen haunts; he entertains a rooted antipathy to any kind of work, and is on familiar terms with several pantomime men at the large houses. But, if you see hurrying along a by-street, keeping as close as he can to the area-railings, a man of about forty or fifty, clad in an old rusty suit of threadbare black cloth which shines with constant wear as if it had been beeswaxed — the trousers tightly strapped down, partly for the look of the thing and partly to keep his old shoes from slipping off at the heels, — if you observe, too, that his yellowish-white neckerchief is carefully pinned up, to conceal the tattered garment underneath, and that his hands are encased in the remnants of an old pair of

beaver gloves, you may set him down as a shabby-genteel man. A glance at that depressed face, and timorous air of conscious poverty, will make your heart ache — always supposing that you are neither a philosopher nor a political economist.

We were once haunted by a shabby-genteel man ; he was bodily present to our senses all day, and he was in our mind's eye all night. The man of whom Sir Walter Scott speaks in his *Demonology*, did not suffer half the persecution from his imaginary gentleman-usher in black velvet, that we sustained from our friend in quondam black cloth. He first attracted our notice by sitting opposite to us in the reading-room of the British Museum ; and what made the man more remarkable was, that he always had before him a couple of shabby-genteel books — two old dogs-eared folios, in mouldy worm-eaten covers, which had once been smart. He was in his chair, every morning, just as the clock struck ten ; he was always the last to leave the room in the afternoon ; and when he did, he quitted it with the air of a man who knew not where else to go, for warmth and quiet. There he used to sit all day, as close to the table as possible, in order to conceal the lack of buttons on his coat : with his old hat carefully deposited at his feet, where he evidently flattered himself it escaped observation.

About two o'clock, you would see him munching a French roll or a penny loaf ; not taking it boldly out of his pocket at once, like a man who knew he was only making a lunch ; but breaking off little bits in his pocket, and eating them by stealth. He knew too well it was his dinner.

When we first saw this poor object, we thought it

quite impossible that his attire could ever become worse. We even went so far, as to speculate on the possibility of his shortly appearing in a decent second-hand suit. We knew nothing about the matter ; he grew more and more shabby-genteel every day. The buttons dropped off his waistcoat one by one ; then, he buttoned his coat ; and when one side of his coat was reduced to the same condition as the waistcoat, he buttoned it over on the other side. He looked somewhat better at the beginning of the week than at the conclusion, because the neckerchief, though yellow, was not quite so dingy ; and, in the midst of all this wretchedness, he never appeared without gloves and straps. He remained in this state for a week or two. At length, one of the buttons on the back of the coat fell off, and then the man himself disappeared, and we thought he was dead.

We were sitting at the same table about a week after his disappearance, and as our eyes rested on his vacant chair, we insensibly fell into a train of meditation on the subject of his retirement from public life. We were wondering whether he had hung himself, or thrown himself off a bridge — whether he really was dead or had only been arrested — when our conjectures were suddenly set at rest by the entry of the man himself. He had undergone some strange metamorphosis, and walked up the centre of the room with an air which showed he was fully conscious of the improvement in his appearance. It was very odd. His clothes were a fine, deep, glossy black ; and yet they looked like the same suit ; nay, there were the very darns with which old acquaintance had made us familiar. The hat, too — nobody could mistake the shape of that hat, with its high crown gradually increasing in circumference towards the top.

Long service had imparted to it a reddish-brown tint; but, now, it was as black as the coat. The truth flashed suddenly upon us — they had been “revived.” It is a deceitful liquid that black and blue reviver; we have watched its effects on many a shabby-genteel man. It betrays its victims into a temporary assumption of importance: possibly into the purchase of a new pair of gloves, or a cheap stock, or some other trifling article of dress. It elevates their spirits for a week, only to depress them, if possible, below their original level. It was so in this case; the transient dignity of the unhappy man decreased, in exact proportion as the “reviver” wore off. The knees of the unmentionables, and the elbows of the coat, and the seams generally, soon began to get alarmingly white. The hat was once more deposited under the table, and its owner crept into his seat as quietly as ever.

There was a week of incessant small rain and mist. At its expiration the “reviver” had entirely vanished, and the shabby-genteel man never afterwards attempted to effect any improvement in his outward appearance.

It would be difficult to name any particular part of town as the principal resort of shabby-genteel men. We have met a great many persons of this description in the neighborhood of the inns of court. They may be met with, in Holborn, between eight and ten any morning; and whoever has the curiosity to enter the Insolvent Debtors’ Court will observe, both among spectators and practitioners, a great variety of them. We never went on ’Change, by any chance, without seeing some shabby-genteel men, and we have often wondered what earthly business they can have there. They will sit there, for hours, leaning on great, dropsical, mildewed umbrellas, or

eating Abernethy biscuits. Nobody speaks to them, nor they to any one. On consideration, we remember to have occasionally seen two shabby-genteel men conversing together on 'Change, but our experience assures us that this is an uncommon circumstance, occasioned by the offer of a pinch of snuff, or some such civility.

It would be a task of equal difficulty, either to assign any particular spot for the residence of these beings, or to endeavor to enumerate their general occupations. We were never engaged in business with more than one shabby-genteel man; and he was a drunken engraver, and lived in a damp back-parlor in a new row of houses at Camden Town, half street, half brick-field, somewhere near the canal. A shabby-genteel man may have no occupation, or he may be a corn agent, or a coal agent, or a wine agent, or a collector of debts, or a broker's assistant, or a broken-down attorney. He may be a clerk of the lowest description, or a contributor to the press of the same grade. Whether our readers have noticed these men, in their walks, as often as we have, we know not; this we know — that the miserably poor man (no matter whether he owes his distresses to his own conduct, or that of others) who feels his poverty and vainly strives to conceal it, is one of the most pitiable objects in human nature. Such objects, with few exceptions, are shabby-genteel people.

CHAPTER XI.

MAKING A NIGHT OF IT.

DAMON and PYTHIAS were undoubtedly very good fellows in their way: the former for his extreme readiness to put in special bail for a friend: and the latter for a certain trump-like punctuality in turning up just in the very nick of time, scarcely less remarkable. Many points in their character have, however, grown obsolete. Damons are rather hard to find, in these days of imprisonment for debt (except the sham ones, and they cost half-a-crown); and, as to the Pythias, the few that have existed in these degenerate times, have had an unfortunate knack of making themselves scarce, at the very moment when their appearance would have been strictly classical. If the actions of these heroes, however, can find no parallel in modern times, their friendship can. We have Damon and Pythias on the one hand. We have Potter and Smithers on the other; and, lest the two last-mentioned names should never have reached the ears of our unenlightened readers, we can do no better than make them acquainted with the owners thereof.

Mr. Thomas Potter, then, was a clerk in the city, and Mr. Robert Smithers was a ditto in the same; their incomes were limited, but their friendship was unbounded. They lived in the same street, walked into town every morning at the same hour, dined at the same slap-bang every day, and revelled in each other's company every

night. They were knit together by the closest ties of intimacy and friendship, or, as Mr. Thomas Potter touchingly observed, they "were thick-and-thin pals, and nothing but it." There was a spice of romance in Mr. Smithers's disposition, a ray of poetry, a gleam of misery, a sort of consciousness of he didn't exactly know what, coming across him he didn't precisely know why — which stood out in fine relief against the off-hand, dashing, amateur-pickpocket-sort-of-manner, which distinguished Mr. Potter in an eminent degree.

The peculiarity of their respective dispositions, extended itself to their individual costume. Mr. Smithers generally appeared in public in a surtout and shoes, with a narrow black neckerchief and a brown hat, very much turned up at the sides — peculiarities which Mr. Potter wholly eschewed, for it was his ambition to do something in the celebrated "kiddy" or stage-coach way, and he had even gone so far as to invest capital in the purchase of a rough blue coat with wooden buttons, made upon the fireman's principle, in which, with the addition of a low-crowned, flower-pot-saucer-shaped hat, he had created no inconsiderable sensation at the Albion in Little Russell Street, and divers other places of public and fashionable resort.

Mr. Potter and Mr. Smithers had mutually agreed that, on the receipt of their quarter's salary, they would jointly and in company "spend the evening" — an evident misnomer — the spending applying, as everybody knows, not to the evening itself but to all the money the individual may chance to be possessed of, on the occasion to which reference is made; and they had likewise agreed that, on the evening aforesaid, they would "make a night of it" — an expressive term, implying the bor-

rowing of several hours from to-morrow morning, adding them to the night before, and manufacturing a compound night of the whole.

The quarter-day arrived at last — we say at last, because quarter-days are as eccentric as comets: moving wonderfully quick when you have a good deal to pay, and marvellously slow when you have a little to receive. Mr. Thomas Potter and Mr. Robert Smithers met by appointment to begin the evening with a dinner; and a nice, snug, comfortable dinner they had, consisting of a little procession of four chops and four kidneys, following each other, supported on either side by a pot of the real draught stout, and attended by divers cushions of bread, and wedges of cheese.

When the cloth was removed, Mr. Thomas Potter ordered the waiter to bring in two goes of his best Scotch whiskey, with warm water and sugar, and a couple of his “very mildest” Havannahs, which the waiter did. Mr. Thomas Potter mixed his grog, and lighted his cigar: Mr. Robert Smithers did the same; and then, Mr. Thomas Potter jocularly proposed as the first toast, “the abolition of all offices whatever” (not sinecures, but counting-houses), which was immediately drunk by Mr. Robert Smithers with enthusiastic applause. So they went on, talking politics, puffing cigars and sipping whiskey-and-water, until the “goes” — most appropriately so called — were both gone, which Mr. Robert Smithers perceiving, immediately ordered in two more goes of the best Scotch whiskey, and two more of the very mildest Havannahs; and the goes kept coming in, and the mild Havannahs kept going out, until, what with the drinking, and lighting, and puffing, and the stale ashes on the table, and the tallow-grease on the cigars,

Mr. Robert Smithers began to doubt the mildness of the Havannahs, and to feel very much as if he had been sitting in a hackney-coach with his back to the horses.

As to Mr. Thomas Potter, he *would* keep laughing out loud, and volunteering inarticulate declarations that he was "all right;" in proof of which he feebly bespoke the evening paper after the next gentleman, but finding it a matter of some difficulty to discover any news in its columns, or to ascertain distinctly whether it had any columns at all, walked slowly out to look for the moon, and, after coming back quite pale with looking up at the sky so long, and attempting to express mirth at Mr. Robert Smithers having fallen asleep, by various galvanic chuckles, laid his head on his arm, and went to sleep also. When he awoke again, Mr. Robert Smithers awoke too, and they both very gravely agreed that it was extremely unwise to eat so many pickled walnuts with the chops, as it was a notorious fact that they always made people queer and sleepy: indeed, if it had not been for the whiskey and cigars, there was no knowing what harm they mightn't have done 'em. So they took some coffee, and after paying the bill, — twelve and twopence the dinner, and the odd tenpence for the waiter — thirteen shillings in all — started out on their expedition to manufacture a night.

It was just half-past eight, so they thought they couldn't do better than go at half-price to the slips at the City Theatre, which they did accordingly. Mr. Robert Smithers, who had become extremely poetical after the settlement of the bill, enlivening the walk by informing Mr. Thomas Potter in confidence that he felt an inward presentiment of approaching dissolution, and subsequently embellishing the theatre, by falling asleep,

with his head and both arms gracefully drooping over the front of the boxes.

Such was the quiet demeanor of the unassuming Smithers, and such were the happy effects of Scotch whiskey and Havannahs on that interesting person ! But Mr. Thomas Potter, whose great aim it was to be considered as a "knowing card," a "fast-goer," and so forth, conducted himself in a very different manner, and commenced going very fast indeed — rather too fast at last, for the patience of the audience to keep pace with him. On his first entry, he contented himself by earnestly calling upon the gentlemen in the gallery to "flare up," accompanying the demand with another request, expressive of his wish that they would instantaneously "form a union," both which requisitions were responded to, in the manner most in vogue on such occasions.

"Give that dog a bone !" cried one gentleman in his shirt-sleeves.

"Where have you been a having half a pint of intermediate beer ?" cried a second. "Tailor !" screamed a third. "Barber's clerk !" shouted a fourth. "Throw him o—VER !" roared a fifth ; while numerous voices concurred in desiring Mr. Thomas Potter to "go home to his mother !" All these taunts Mr. Thomas Potter received with supreme contempt, cocking the low-crowned hat a little more on one side, whenever any reference was made to his personal appearance, and, standing up with his arms a-kimbo, expressing defiance melodramatically.

The overture — to which these various sounds had been an *ad libitum* accompaniment — concluded, the second piece began, and Mr. Thomas Potter, emboldened by impunity, proceeded to behave in a most unprece-

dented and outrageous manner. First, of all, he imitated the shake of the principal female singer ; then, groaned at the blue fire ; then, affected to be frightened into convulsions of terror at the appearance of the ghost ; and, lastly, not only made a running commentary, in an audible voice, upon the dialogue on the stage, but actually awoke Mr. Robert Smithers, who, hearing his companion making a noise, and having a very indistinct notion where he was, or what was required of him, immediately, by way of imitating a good example, set up the most unearthly, unremitting, and appalling howling that ever audience heard. It was too much. "Turn them out !" was the general cry. A noise, as of shuffling of feet, and men being knocked up with violence against wainscoting, was heard : a hurried dialogue of "Come out ?" — "I won't !" — "You shall !" — "I shan't !" — "Give me your card, sir !" — "You're a scoundrel, sir !" and so forth succeeded. A round of applause betokened the approbation of the audience, and Mr. Robert Smithers and Mr. Thomas Potter found themselves shot with astonishing swiftness into the road, without having had the trouble of once putting foot to ground during the whole progress of their rapid descent.

Mr. Robert Smithers, being constitutionally one of the slow-goers, and having had quite enough of fast-going, in the course of his recent expulsion, to last until the quarter-day then next ensuing at the very least, had no sooner emerged with his companion from the precincts of Milton Street, than he proceeded to indulge in circuitous references to the beauties of sleep, mingled with distant allusions to the propriety of returning to Islington, and testing the influence of their patent Bramahs over the street-door locks to which they respectively belonged. Mr.

Thomas Potter, however, was valorous and peremptory. They had come out to make a night of it : and a night must be made. So Mr. Robert Smithers, who was three parts dull, and the other dismal, despairingly assented ; and they went into a wine-vaults, to get materials for assisting them in making a night ; where they found a good many young ladies, and various old gentlemen, and a plentiful sprinkling of hackney-coachmen and cab-drivers, all drinking and talking together ; and Mr. Thomas Potter and Mr. Robert Smithers drank small glasses of brandy, and large glasses of soda, until they began to have a very confused idea, either of things in general, or of anything in particular ; and, when they had done treating themselves they began to treat everybody else ; and the rest of the entertainment was a confused mixture of heads and heels, black eyes and blue uniforms, mud and gas-lights, thick doors, and stone paving.

Then, as standard novelists expressively inform us — “all was a blank !” and in the morning the blank was filled up with the words “STATION-HOUSE,” and the station-house was filled up with Mr. Thomas Potter, Mr. Robert Smithers, and the major part of their wine-vault companions of the preceding night, with a comparatively small portion of clothing of any kind. And it was disclosed at the Police-office, to the indignation of the Bench, and the astonishment of the spectators, how one Robert Smithers, aided and abetted by one Thomas Potter, had knocked down and beaten, in divers streets, at different times, five men, four boys, and three women ; how the said Thomas Potter had feloniously obtained possession of five door-knockers, two bell-handles, and a bonnet ; how Robert Smithers, his friend, had sworn, at

least forty pounds' worth of oaths, at the rate of **five** shillings a-piece; terrified whole streets full of Her Majesty's subjects with awful shrieks and alarms of fire; destroyed the uniforms of five policemen; and committed various other atrocities, too numerous to recapitulate. And the magistrate, after an appropriate reprimand, fined Mr. Thomas Potter and Mr. Robert Smithers five shillings each, for being, what the law vulgarly terms, drunk; and thirty-four pounds for seventeen assaults at forty shillings a head, with liberty to speak to the prosecutors.

The prosecutors *were* spoken to, and Messrs. Potter and Smithers lived on credit, for a quarter, as best they might; and, although the prosecutors expressed their readiness to be assaulted twice a week, on the same terms, they have never since been detected in "making a night of it."

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRISONERS' VAN.

WE were passing the corner of Bow Street, on our return from a lounging excursion the other afternoon, when a crowd assembled round the door of the Police-office attracted our attention. We turned up the street accordingly. There were thirty or forty people, standing on the pavement and half across the road; and a few stragglers were patiently stationed on the opposite side of the way — all evidently waiting in expectation of

some arrival. We waited too, a few minutes, but nothing occurred; so we turned round to an unshorn sallow looking cobbler, who was standing next us with his hands under the bib of his apron, and put the usual question of "What's the matter?" The cobbler eyed us from head to foot, with superlative contempt, and laconically replied "Nuffin."

Now, we were perfectly aware that if two men stop in the street to look at any given object, or even to gaze in the air, two hundred men will be assembled in no time; but, as we knew very well that no crowd of people could by possibility remain in a street for five minutes without getting up a little amusement among themselves, unless they had some absorbing object in view, the natural inquiry next in order was, "What are all these people waiting here for?" — "Her Majesty's carriage," replied the cobbler. This was still more extraordinary. We could not imagine what earthly business Her Majesty's carriage could have at the Public Office, Bow Street. We were beginning to ruminate on the possible causes of such an uncommon appearance, when a general exclamation from all the boys in the crowd of "Here's the wan!" caused us to raise our heads, and look up the street.

The covered vehicle, in which prisoners are conveyed from the police-offices to the different prisons, was coming along at full speed. It then occurred to us, for the first time, that Her Majesty's carriage was merely another name for the prisoner's van, conferred upon it, not only by reason of the superior gentility of the term, but because the aforesaid van is maintained at Her Majesty's expense: having been originally started for the exclusive accommodation of ladies and gentlemen under the neces-

sity of visiting the various houses of call known by the general denomination of "Her Majesty's Jails."

The van drew up at the office-door, and the people thronged round the steps, just leaving a little alley for the prisoners to pass through. Our friend the cobbler, and the other stragglers, crossed over, and we followed their example. The driver, and another man who had been seated by his side in front of the vehicle, dismounted, and were admitted into the office. The office-door was closed after them, and the crowd were on the tiptoe of expectation.

After a few minutes' delay, the door again opened, and the two first prisoners appeared. They were a couple of girls, of whom the elder could not be more than sixteen, and the younger of whom had certainly not attained her fourteenth year. That they were sisters, was evident, from the resemblance which still subsisted between them, though two additional years of depravity had fixed their brand upon the elder girl's features, as legibly as if a red-hot iron had seared them. They were both gaudily dressed, the younger one especially; and, although there was a strong similarity between them in both respects, which was rendered the more obvious by their being handcuffed together, it is impossible to conceive a greater contrast than the demeanor of the two presented. The younger girl was weeping bitterly — not for display, or in the hope of producing effect, but for very shame; her face was buried in her handkerchief; and her whole manner was but too expressive of bitter and unavailing sorrow.

"How long are you for, Emily?" screamed a red-faced woman in the crowd. "Six weeks and labor," replied the elder girl with a flaunting laugh; "and that's better

than the stone jug anyhow ; the mill's a deal better than the Sessions, and here's Bella agoing too for the first time. Hold up your head, you chicken," she continued, boisterously tearing the other girl's handkerchief away ; " Hold up your head, and show 'em your face, I a'n't jealous, but I'm blessed if I a'n't game ! " — " That's ight, old gal," exclaimed a man in a paper cap, who, in common with the greater part of the crowd, had been inexpressibly delighted with this little incident. — " Right ! " replied the girl ! " ah, to be sure ; what's the odds, eh ? " — " Come ! In with you," interrupted the driver. — " Don't you be in a hurry, coachman," replied the girl, " and recollect I want to be set down in Cold Bath Fields — large house with a high garden-wall in front ; you can't mistake it. Hallo. Bella, where are you going to — you'll pull my precious arm off ? " This was addressed to the younger girl, who, in her anxiety to hide herself in the caravan, had ascended the steps first, and forgotten the strain upon the handcuff ; " Come down, and let's show you the way." And after jerking the miserable girl down with a force which made her stagger on the pavement, she got into the vehicle, and was followed by her wretched companion.

These two girls had been thrown upon London streets, their vices and debauchery, by a sordid and rapacious mother. What the younger girl was, then, the elder had been once ; and what the elder then was, the younger must soon become. A melancholy prospect, but how surely to be realized ; a tragic drama, but how often acted ! Turn to the prisons and police offices of London — nay, look into the very streets themselves. These things pass before our eyes, day after day, and hour after hour — they have become such matters of course, that

they are utterly disregarded. The progress of these girls in crime will be as rapid as the flight of a pestilence, resembling it too in its baneful influence and wide-spread infection. Step by step, how many wretched females, within the sphere of every man's observation, have become involved in a career of vice, frightful to contemplate; hopeless at its commencement, loathsome and repulsive in its course; friendless, forlorn, and unpitied, at its miserable conclusion!

There were other prisoners — boys of ten, as hardened in vice as men of fifty — a houseless vagrant, going joyfully to prison as a place of food and shelter, handcuffed to a man whose prospects were ruined, character lost, and family rendered destitute, by his first offence. Our curiosity, however, was satisfied. The first group had left an impression on our mind we would gladly have avoided, and would willingly have effaced.

The crowd dispersed; the vehicle rolled away with its load of guilt and misfortune; and we saw no more of the Prisoners' Van.

TALES.



CHAPTER I.

THE BOARDING-HOUSE. CHAPTER I.

Mrs. TIBBS was, beyond all dispute, the most tidy, fidgety, thrifty, little personage that ever inhaled the smoke of London : and the house of Mrs. Tibbs was, decidedly, the neatest in all Great Coram Street. The area and the area steps, and the street-door, and the street-door steps, and the brass handle, and the door-plate, and the knocker, and the fan-light, were all as clean and bright as indefatigable whitewashing, and hearth-stoning, and scrubbing and rubbing could make them. The wonder was, that the brass door-plate, with the interesting inscription "Mrs. TIBBS," had never caught fire from constant friction, so perseveringly was it polished. There were meat-safe-looking blinds in the parlor-windows, blue and gold curtains in the drawing-room, and spring-roller blinds, as Mrs. Tibbs was wont in the pride of her heart to boast, "all the way up." The bell-lamp in the passage looked as clear as a soap-bubble ; you could see yourself in all the tables, and French-polish yourself on any one of the chairs. The banisters were beeswaxed ; and the very stair-wires made your eyes wink, they were so glittering.

Mrs. Tibbs was somewhat short of stature, and Mr

Tibbs was by no means a large man. He had moreover very short legs, but, by way of indemnification, his face was peculiarly long. He was to his wife what the 0 is in 90 — he was of some importance *with* her — he was nothing without her. Mrs. Tibbs was always talking. Mr. Tibbs rarely spoke ; but, if it were at any time possible to put in a word, when he should have said nothing at all, he had that talent. Mrs. Tibbs detested long stories, and Mr. Tibbs had one, the conclusion of which had never been heard by his most intimate friends. It always began, “I recollect when I was in the volunteer corps, in eighteen hundred and six,” — but, as he spoke very slowly and softly, and his better half very quickly and loudly, he rarely got beyond the introductory sentence. He was a melancholy specimen of the story-teller. He was the wandering Jew of Joe Millerism.

Mr. Tibbs enjoyed a small independence from the pension-list — about 43*l.* 15*s.* 10*d.* a year. His father, mother, and five interesting scions from the same stock drew a like sum from the revenue of a grateful country, though for what particular service was never known. But, as this said independence was not quite sufficient to furnish two people with *all* the luxuries of this life, it had occurred to the busy little spouse of Tibbs, that the best thing she could do with a legacy of 700*l.*, would be to take and furnish a tolerable house — somewhere in that partially explored tract of country which lies between the British Museum, and a remote village called Somers’ Town — for the reception of boarders. Great Coram Street was the spot pitched upon. The house had been furnished accordingly ; two female servants and a boy engaged ; and an advertisement inserted in the

morning papers, informing the public that "Six individuals would meet with all the comforts of a cheerful musical home in a select private family, residing within ten minutes' walk of"—everywhere. Answers out of number were received, with all sorts of initials; all the letters of the alphabet seemed to be seized with a sudden wish to go out boarding and lodging; voluminous was the correspondence between Mrs. Tibbs and the applicants; and most profound was the secrecy observed. "E." didn't like this, "I." couldn't think of putting up with that; "I. O. U." didn't think the terms would suit him; and "G. R." had never slept in a French bed. The result, however, was, that three gentlemen became inmates of Mrs. Tibbs's house, on terms which were "agreeable to all parties." In went the advertisement again, and a lady with her two daughters, proposed to increase—not their families, but Mrs. Tibbs's.

"Charming woman, that Mrs. Maplesone!" said Mrs. Tibbs, as she and her spouse were sitting by the fire after breakfast; the gentlemen having gone out on their several avocations. "Charming woman, indeed!" repeated little Mrs. Tibbs, more by way of soliloquy than anything else, for she never thought of consulting her husband. "And the two daughters are delightful. We must have some fish to-day; they'll join us at dinner for the first time."

Mr. Tibbs placed the poker at right angles with the fire shovel, and essayed to speak, but recollected he had nothing to say.

"The young ladies," continued Mrs. T., "have kindly volunteered to bring their own piano."

Tibbs thought of the volunteer story, but did not venture it. A bright thought struck him—

"It's very likely —" said he.

"Pray don't lean your head against the paper," interrupted Mrs. Tibbs; "and don't put your feet on the steel fender; that's worse."

Tibbs took his head from the paper, and his feet from the fender, and proceeded. "It's very likely one of the young ladies may set her cap at young Mr. Simpson, and you know a marriage —"

"A what!" shrieked Mrs. Tibbs. Tibbs modestly repeated his former suggestion.

"I beg you won't mention such a thing," said Mrs. T. "A marriage indeed! — to rob me of my boarders — no, not for the world."

Tibbs thought in his own mind that the event was by no means unlikely; but, as he never argued with his wife, he put a stop to the dialogue, by observing it was "time to go to business." He always went out at ten o'clock in the morning, and returned at five in the afternoon, with an exceedingly dirty face, and smelling mouldy. Nobody knew what he was, or where he went; but Mrs. Tibbs used to say with an air of great importance that he was engaged in the City.

The Miss Maplesones and their accomplished parent arrived in the course of the afternoon in a hackney coach, and accompanied by a most astonishing number of packages. Trunks, bonnet-boxes, muff-boxes, and parasols, guitar-cases, and parcels of all imaginable shapes, done up in brown paper, and fastened with pins, filled the passage. Then, there was such a running up and down with the luggage, such scampering for warm water for the ladies to wash in, and such a bustle, and confusion, and heating of servants and curling-irons, as had never been known in Great Coram Street before. Little Mrs

Tibbs was quite in her element, bustling about, talking incessantly, and distributing towels and soap like a head-nurse in a hospital. The house was not restored to its usual state of quiet repose, until the ladies were safely shut up in their respective bedrooms, engaged in the important occupation of dressing for dinner.

"Are these gals 'andsome?" inquired Mr. Simpson of Mr. Septimus Hicks, another of the boarders, as they were amusing themselves in the drawing-room, before dinner, by lolling on sofas and contemplating their pumps.

"Don't know," replied Mr. Septimus Hicks, who was a tallish, white-faced young man, with spectacles, and a black ribbon round his neck instead of a neckerchief—a most interesting person: a poetical walker of the hospitals, and a "very talented young man." He was fond of "lugging" into conversation, all sorts of quotations from Don Juan, without fettering himself by the propriety of their application; in which particular he was remarkably independent. The other, Mr. Simpson, was one of those young men, who are in society what walking gentlemen are on the stage, only infinitely worse skilled in his vocation than the most indifferent artist. He was as empty-headed as the great bell of St. Paul's; always dressed according to the caricatures published in the monthly fashions; and spelt Character with a K.

"I saw a devilish number of parcels in the passage when I came home," simpered Mr. Simpson.

"Materials for the toilet, no doubt," returned the Don Juan reader.

——— "Much linen, lace, and several pair
Of stockings, slippers, brushes, combs, complete,
With other articles of ladies' fair,
To keep them beautiful, or leave them neat."

"Is that from Milton?" inquired Mr. Simpson.

"No — from Byron," returned Mr. Hicks, with a look of contempt. He was quite sure of his author, because he had never read any other. "Hush! Here come the gals," and they both commenced talking in a very loud key.

"Mrs. Maplesone and the Miss Maplesones, Mr. Hicks. Mr. Hicks — Mrs. Maplesone and the Miss Maplesones," said Mrs. Tibbs, with a very red face, for she had been superintending the cooking operations below stairs, and looked like a wax doll on a sunny day. "Mr. Simpson, I beg your pardon — Mr. Simpson — Mrs. Maplesone and the Miss Maplesones" — and *vice versa*. The gentlemen immediately began to slide about with much politeness, and to look as if they wished their arms had been legs, so little did they know what to do with them. The ladies smiled, courtesied, and glided into chairs, and dived for dropped pocket-handkerchiefs; the gentlemen leant against two of the curtain-pegs; Mrs. Tibbs went through an admirable bit of serious pantomime with a servant who had come up to ask some question about the fish-sauce; and then the two young ladies looked at each other; and everybody else appeared to discover something very attractive in the pattern of the fender.

"Julia, my love," said Mrs. Maplesone to her youngest daughter, in a tone loud enough for the remainder of the company to hear, — "Julia."

"Yes, Ma."

"Don't stoop." — This was said for the purpose of directing general attention to Miss Julia's figure, which was undeniable. Everybody looked at her, accordingly, and there was another pause.

"We had the most uncivil hackney-coachman to-day,

you can imagine," said Mrs. Maplesone to Mrs. Tibbs, in a confidential tone.

"Dear me!" replied the hostess, with an air of great commiseration. She couldn't say more, for the servant again appeared at the door, and commenced telegraphing most earnestly to her "Missis."

"I think hackney-coachmen generally *are* uncivil," said Mr. Hicks in his most insinuating tone.

"Positively I think they are," replied Mrs. Maplesone, as if the idea had never struck her before.

"And cabmen, too," said Mr. Simpson. This remark was a failure, for no one intimated, by word or sign, the slightest knowledge of the manners and customs of cabmen.

"Robinson, what *do* you want?" said Mrs. Tibbs to the servant, who, by way of making her presence known to her mistress, had been giving sundry hems and sniffs outside the door, during the preceding five minutes.

"Please, ma'am, master wants his clean things," replied the servant, taken off her guard. The two young men turned their faces to the window, and "went off" like a couple of bottles of ginger beer; the ladies put their handkerchiefs to their mouths; and little Mrs. Tibbs bustled out of the room to give Tibbs his clean linen, — and the servant warning.

Mr. Calton, the remaining boarder, shortly afterwards made his appearance, and proved a surprising promoter of the conversation. Mr. Calton was a superannuated bea — an old boy. He used to say of himself that although his features were not regularly handsome, they were striking. They certainly were. It was impossible to look at his face without being reminded of a chubby street-door knocker, half-lion half-monkey; and the com-

parison might be extended to his whole character and conversation. He had stood still, while everything else had been moving. He never originated a conversation, or started an idea ; but if any commonplace topic were broached, or, to pursue the comparison, if anybody *lifted him up*, he would hammer away with surprising rapidity. He had the tic-doloureux occasionally, and then he might be said to be muffled, because he did not make quite as much noise as at other times, when he would go on prosing, rat-tat-tat the same thing over and over again. He had never been married ; but he was still on the look-out for a wife with money. He had a life-interest worth about 300*l.* a year — he was exceedingly vain, and inordinately selfish. He had acquired the reputation of being the very pink of politeness, and he walked round the park, and up Regent Street, every day.

This respectable personage had made up his mind to render himself exceedingly agreeable to Mrs. Maplesone — indeed, the desire of being as amiable as possible extended itself to the whole party ; Mrs. Tibbs having considered it an admirable little bit of management to represent to the gentlemen that she had *some* reason to believe the ladies were fortunes, and to hint to the ladies, that all the gentlemen were “eligible.” A little flirtation, she thought, might keep her house full, without leading to any other result.

Mrs. Maplesone was an enterprising widow of about fifty : shrewd, scheming, and good-looking. She was amiably anxious on behalf of her daughters ; in proof whereof she used to remark, that she would have no objection to marry again, if it would benefit her dear girls — she could have no other motive. The “dear girls” themselves were not at all insensible to the merits

of "a good establishment." One of them was twenty-five; the other, three years younger. They had been at different watering-places, for four seasons; they had gambled at libraries, read books in balconies, sold at fancy fairs, danced at assemblies, talked sentiment—in short, they had done all that industrious girls could do—but, as yet, to no purpose.

"What a magnificent dresser Mr. Simpson is!" whispered Matilda Maplesone to her sister Julia.

"Splendid!" returned the youngest. The magnificent individual alluded to wore a maroon-colored dress-coat, with a velvet collar and cuffs of the same tint—very like that which usually invests the form of the distinguished unknown who condescends to play the "swell" in the pantomime at "Richardson's Show."

"What whiskers!" said Miss Julia.

"Charming!" responded her sister; "and what hair!" His hair was like a wig, and distinguished by that insinuating wave which graces the shining locks of those *chefs-d'œuvre* of art surmounting the waxen images in Bartellot's window, in Regent Street; his whiskers meeting beneath his chin, seemed strings wherewith to tie it on, ere science had rendered them unnecessary by her patent invisible springs.

"Dinner's on the table, ma'am, if you please," said the boy, who now appeared for the first time, in a revived black coat of his master's.

"Oh! Mr. Calton, will you lead Mrs. Maplesone?—Thank you." Mr. Simpson offered his arm to Miss Julia; Mr. Septimus Hicks escorted the lovely Matilda; and the procession proceeded to the dining-room. Mr. Tibbs was introduced, and Mr. Tibbs bobbed up and down to the three ladies like a figure in a Dutch clock,

with a powerful spring in the middle of his body, and then dived rapidly into his seat at the bottom of the table, delighted to screen himself behind a soup-tureen, which he could just see over, and that was all. The boarders were seated, a lady and gentleman alternately, like the layers of bread and meat in a plate of sandwiches; and then Mrs. Tibbs directed James to take off the covers. Salmon, lobster-sauce, giblet-soup, and the usual accompaniments were *discovered*: potatoes like petrifications, and bits of toasted bread, the shape and size of blank dice.

"Soup for Mrs. Maplesone, my dear," said the bustling Mrs. Tibbs. She always called her husband "my dear" before company. Tibbs, who had been eating his bread, and calculating how long it would be before he should get any fish, helped the soup in a hurry, made a small island on the tablecloth, and put his glass upon it, to hide it from his wife.

"Miss Julia, shall I assist you to some fish?"

"If you please — very little — oh! plenty, thank you" (a bit about the size of a walnut put upon the plate).

"Julia is a *very* little eater," said Mrs. Maplesone to Mr. Calton.

The knocker gave a single rap. He was busy eating the fish with his eyes: so he only ejaculated, "Ah!"

"My dear," said Mrs. Tibbs to her spouse after every one else had been helped, "What do *you* take?" The inquiry was accompanied with a look intimating that he mustn't say fish, because there was not much left. Tibbs thought the frown referred to the island on the tablecloth; he therefore coolly replied, "Why — I'll take a little — fish, I think."

"Did you say fish, my dear?" (another frown.)

"Yes, dear," replied the villain, with an expression of acute hunger depicted in his countenance. The tears almost started to Mrs. Tibbs's eyes as she helped her "wretch of a husband," as she inwardly called him, to the last eatable bit of salmon on the dish.

"James, take this to your master, and take away your master's knife." This was deliberate revenge, as Tibbs never could eat fish without one. He was, however, constrained to chase small particles of salmon round and round his plate with a piece of bread and a fork, the number of successful attempts being about one in seventeen.

"Take away, James," said Mrs. Tibbs, as Tibbs swallowed the fourth mouthful — and away went the plates like lightning.

"I'll take a bit of bread, James," said the poor "master of the house," more hungry than ever.

"Never mind your master now, James," said Mrs. Tibbs, "see about the meat." This was conveyed in the tone in which ladies usually give admonitions to servants in company, that is to say, a low one; but which, like a stage whisper, from its peculiar emphasis, is most distinctly heard by everybody present.

A pause ensued, before the table was replenished — a sort of parenthesis in which Mr. Simpson, Mr. Calton, and Mr. Hicks, produced respectfully a bottle of sauterne, bucellas, and sherry, and took wine with everybody — except Tibbs. No one ever thought of him.

Between the fish and an intimated sirloin, there was a prolonged interval.

Here was an opportunity for Mr. Hicks. He could not resist the singularly appropriate quotation —

"But beef is rare within these oxless isles;
Goats' flesh there is, no doubt, and kid, and mutton,
And, when a holiday upon them smiles,
A joint upon their barbarous spits they put on."

"Very ungentlemanly behavior," thought little Mrs. Tibbs, "to talk in that way."

"Ah," said Mr. Calton, filling his glass. "Tom Moore is my poet."

"And mine," said Mrs. Maplesone.

"And mine," said Miss Julia.

"And mine," added Mr. Simpson.

"Look at his compositions," resumed the knocker.

"To be sure," said Simpson, with confidence.

"Look at Don Juan," replied Mr. Septimus Hicks.

"Julia's letter," suggested Miss Matilda.

"Can anything be grander than the Fire Worshipers?" inquired Miss Julia.

"To be sure," said Simpson.

"Or Paradise and the Peri," said the old beau.

"Yes; or Paradise and the Peer," repeated Simpson, who thought he was getting through it capitally.

"It's all very well," replied Mr. Septimus Hicks, who, as we have before hinted, never had read anything but Don Juan. "Where will you find anything finer than the description of the siege, at the commencement of the seventh canto?"

"Talking of a siege," said Tibbs, with a mouthful of bread — "when I was in the volunteer corps, in eighteen hundred and six, our commanding officer was Sir Charles Rampart; and one day, when we were exercising on the ground on which the London University now stands, he says, says he, Tibbs (calling me from the ranks) Tibbs —"

"Tell your master, James," interrupted Mrs. Tibbs, in an awfully distinct tone, "tell your master if he *won't* carve those fowls, to send them to me." The discomfited volunteer instantly set to work, and carved the fowls almost as expeditiously as his wife operated on the haunch of mutton. Whether he ever finished the story is not known; but, if he did, nobody heard it.

As the ice was now broken, and the new inmates more at home, every member of the company felt more at ease. Tibbs himself most certainly did, because he went to sleep immediately after dinner. Mr. Hicks and the ladies discoursed most eloquently about poetry, and the theatres, and Lord Chesterfield's Letters; and Mr. Calton followed up what everybody said, with continuous double knocks. Mrs. Tibbs highly approved of every observation that fell from Mrs. Maplesone; and as Mr. Simpson sat with a smile upon his face and said "Yes," or "Certainly," at intervals of about four minutes each, he received full credit for understanding what was going forward. The gentlemen rejoined the ladies in the drawing-room very shortly after they had left the dining-parlor. Mrs. Maplesone and Mr. Calton played cribbage, and the "young people" amused themselves with music and conversation. The Miss Maplesones sang the most fascinating duets, and accompanied themselves on guitars, ornamented with bits of ethereal blue ribbon. Mr. Simpson put on a pink waistcoat, and said he was in raptures; and Mr. Hicks felt in the seventh heaven of poetry, or the seventh canto of Don Juan — it was the same thing to him. Mrs. Tibbs was quite charmed with the new comers; and Mr. Tibbs spent the evening in his usual way — he went to sleep, and woke up, and went to sleep again, and woke at supper-time.

* * * * *

We are not about to adopt the license of novel-writers. and to let "years roll on;" but we will take the liberty of requesting the reader to suppose that six months have elapsed, since the dinner we have described, and that Mrs. Tibbs's boarders have, during that period, sang, and danced, and gone to theatres and exhibitions, together, as ladies and gentlemen, wherever they board, often do. And we will beg them, the period we have mentioned having elapsed, to imagine farther, that Mr. Septimus Hicks received, in his own bedroom (a front attic), at an early hour one morning, a note from Mr. Calton, requesting the favor of seeing him, as soon as convenient to himself, in his (Calton's) dressing-room on the second floor back.

"Tell Mr. Calton I'll come down directly," said Mr. Septimus to the boy. "Stop — is Mr. Calton unwell?" inquired this excited walker of hospitals, as he put on a bed-furniture-looking dressing-gown.

"Not as I knows on, sir," replied the boy. "Please, sir, he looked rather rum, as it might be."

"Ah, that's no proof of his being ill," returned Hicks, unconsciously. "Very well: I'll be down directly." Down-stairs ran the boy with the message, and down went the excited Hicks himself, almost as soon as the message was delivered. "Tap, tap." "Come in." — Door opens, and discovers Mr. Calton sitting in an easy-chair. Mutual shakes of the hand exchanged, and Mr. Septimus Hicks motioned to a seat. A short pause. Mr. Hicks coughed, and Mr. Calton took a pinch of snuff. It was one of those interviews where neither party knows what to say. Mr. Septimus Hicks broke silence.

"I received a note —" he said, very tremulously in a voice like a Punch with a cold.

"Yes," returned the other, "you did."

"Exactly."

"Yes."

Now, although this dialogue must have been satisfactory, both gentlemen felt there was something more important to be said ; therefore they did as most men in such a situation would have done — they looked at the table with a determined aspect. The conversation had been opened, however, and Mr. Calton had made up his mind to continue it, with a regular double knock. He always spoke very pompously.

"Hicks," said he, "I have sent for you, in consequence of certain arrangements which are pending in this house, connected with a marriage."

"With a marriage!" gasped Hicks, compared with whose expression of countenance, Hamlet's, when he sees his father's ghost, is pleasing and composed.

"With a marriage," returned the knocker. "I have sent for you to prove the great confidence I can repose in you."

"And will you betray me?" eagerly inquired Hicks, who in his alarm had even forgotten to quote.

"*I betray you! Won't you betray me?*"

"Never: no one shall know, to my dying day, that you had a hand in the business," responded the agitated Hicks, with an inflamed countenance, and his hair standing on end as if he were on the stool of an electrifying machine in full operation.

"People must know that, some time or other — within a year, I imagine," said Mr. Calton, with an air of great self-complacency, "we *may* have a family."

"*We!* — That won't affect you, surely?"

"The devil it won't!"

"No! how can it?" said the bewildered Hicks. Calton was too much inwrapped in the contemplation of his happiness to see the equivocal between Hicks and himself; and threw himself back in his chair. "Oh, Matilda!" sighed the antique beau, in a lackadaisical voice, and applying his right hand a little to the left of the fourth button of his waistcoat, counting from the bottom. "Oh, Matilda!"

"What Matilda?" inquired Hicks, starting up.

"Matilda Maplesone," responded the other, doing the same.

"I marry her to-morrow morning," said Hicks.

"It's false," rejoined his companion: "I marry her!"

"You marry her!"

"I marry her!"

"You marry Matilda Maplesone?"

"Matilda Maplesone."

"*Miss Maplesone marry you?*"

"Miss Maplesone! No: Mrs. Maplesone."

"Good Heaven!" said Hicks, falling into his chair.

"You marry the mother, and I the daughter!"

"Most extraordinary circumstance!" replied Mr. Calton, "and rather inconvenient too; for the fact is, that owing to Matilda's wishing to keep her intention secret from her daughters until the ceremony had taken place, she doesn't like applying to any of her friends to give her away. I entertain an objection to making the affair known to my acquaintance just now; and the consequence is, that I sent to you, to know whether you'd oblige me by acting as father."

"I should have been most happy, I assure you," said Hicks, in a tone of condolence; "but, you see, I shall be

acting as bridegroom. One character is frequently a consequence of the other ; but it is not usual to act in both at the same time. There's Simpson — I have no doubt he'll do it for you."

"I don't like to ask him," replied Calton ; "he's such a donkey."

Mr. Septimus Hicks looked up at the ceiling, and down at the floor ; at last an idea struck him. "Let the man of the house, Tibbs, be the father," he suggested ; and then he quoted, as peculiarly applicable to Tibbs and the pair —

"Oh Powers of Heaven ! what dark eyes meets she there ?
'Tis — 'tis her father's — fixed upon the pair."

"The idea has struck me already," said Mr. Calton "but, you see, Matilda, for what reason I know not, is very anxious that Mrs. Tibbs should know nothing about it, till it's all over. It's a natural delicacy, after all, you know."

"He's the best-natured little man in existence, if you manage him properly," said Mr. Septimus Hicks. "Tell him not to mention it to his wife, and assure him she won't mind it, and he'll do it directly. My marriage is to be a secret one, on account of the mother and *my* father : therefore he must be enjoined to secrecy."

A small double knock, like a presumptuous single one, was that instant heard at the street-door. It was Tibbs it could be no one else ; for no one else occupied five minutes in rubbing his shoes. He had been out to pay the baker's bill.

"Mr. Tibbs," called Mr. Calton in a very bland tone, looking over the banisters.

"Sir !" replied he of the dirty face.

"Will you have the kindness to step up-stairs for a moment?"

"Certainly, sir," said Tibbs, delighted to be taken notice of. The bedroom-door was carefully closed, and Tibbs, having put his hat on the floor (as most timid men do), and been accommodated with a seat, looked as astounded as if he were suddenly summoned before the familiars of the Inquisition.

"A rather unpleasant occurrence, Mr. Tibbs," said Calton, in a very portentous manner, "obliges me to consult you, and to beg you will not communicate what I am about to say, to your wife."

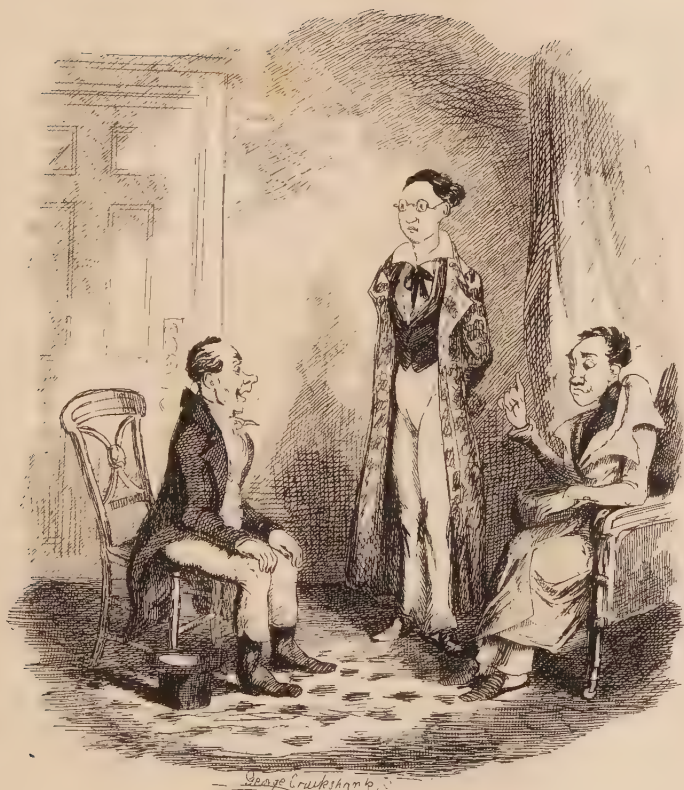
Tibbs acquiesced, wondering in his own mind what the deuce the other could have done, and imagining that at least he must have broken the best decanters.

Mr. Calton resumed; "I am placed, Mr. Tibbs, in rather an unpleasant situation."

Tibbs looked at Mr. Septimus Hicks, as if he thought Mr. H.'s being in the immediate vicinity of his fellow-boarder might constitute the unpleasantness of his situation; but as he did not exactly know what to say, he merely ejaculated the monosyllable "Lor!"

"Now," continued the knocker, "let me beg you will exhibit no manifestations of surprise, which may be overheard by the domestics, when I tell you — command your feelings of astonishment — that two inmates of this house intend to be married to-morrow morning." And he drew back his chair, several feet, to perceive the effect of the unlooked-for announcement.

If Tibbs had rushed from the room, staggered down-stairs, and fainted in the passage — if he had instantaneously jumped out of the window into the mews behind the house, in an agony of surprise — his behavior



would have been much less inexplicable to Mr. Calton than it was, when he put his hands into his inexpressible-pockets, and said with a half-chuckle, "Just so."

"You are not surprised, Mr. Tibbs?" inquired Mr. Calton.

"Bless you, no, sir," returned Tibbs; "after all it's very natural. When two young people get together, you know —"

"Certainly, certainly," said Calton, with an indescribable air of self-satisfaction.

"You don't think it's at all an out-of-the-way affair then?" asked Mr. Septimus Hicks, who had watched the countenance of Tibbs in mute astonishment.

"No, sir," replied Tibbs; "I was just the same at his age." He actually smiled when he said this.

"How devilish well I must carry my years!" thought the delighted old beau, knowing he was at least ten years older than Tibbs at that moment.

"Well, then, to come to the point at once," he continued, "I have to ask you whether you will object to act as father on the occasion?"

"Certainly not," replied Tibbs; still without evincing an atom of surprise.

"You will not?"

"Decidedly not," reiterated Tibbs, still as calm as a pot of porter with the head off

Mr. Calton seized the hand of the petticoat-governed little man, and vowed eternal friendship from that hour. Hicks, who was all admiration and surprise, did the same.

"Now confess," asked Mr. Calton of Tibbs, as he picked up his hat, "were you not a little surprised?"

"I b'lieve you!" replied that illustrious person, holding

up one hand; "I b'lieve you! When I first heard of it."

"So sudden," said Septimus Hicks.

"So strange to ask *me*, you know," said Tibbs.

"So odd altogether!" said the superannuated love-maker; and then all three laughed.

"I say," said Tibbs, shutting the door which he had previously opened, and giving full vent to a hitherto corked-up giggle, "what bothers me is, what *will* his father say?"

Mr. Septimus Hicks looked at Mr. Calton.

"Yes; but the best of it is," said the latter, giggling in his turn, "I haven't got a father — he! he! he!"

"*You* haven't got a father. No; but *he* has," said Tibbs.

"*Who* has?" inquired Septimus Hicks.

"*Why him.*"

"Him, who? Do you know my secret? Do you mean me?"

"You! No; you know who I mean," returned Tibbs with a knowing wink.

"For Heaven's sake whom *do* you mean?" inquired Mr. Calton, who, like Septimus Hicks, was all but out of his senses at the strange confusion.

"Why Mr. Simpson, of course," replied Tibbs; "who else could I mean?"

"I see it all," said the Byron-quoter; "Simpson marries Julia Maplesone to-morrow morning!"

"Undoubtedly," replied Tibbs, thoroughly satisfied, "of course he does."

It would require the pencil of Hogarth to illustrate — our feeble pen is inadequate to describe — the expression which the countenances of Mr. Calton and Mr. Septimus

Hicks respectively assumed, at this unexpected announcement. Equally impossible is it to describe, although perhaps it is easier for our lady readers to imagine, what arts the three ladies could have used, so completely to entangle their separate partners. Whatever they were, however, they were successful. The mother was perfectly aware of the intended marriage of both daughters; and the young ladies were equally acquainted with the intention of their estimable parent. They agreed, however, that it would have a much better appearance if each feigned ignorance of the other's engagement; and it was equally desirable that all the marriages should take place on the same day, to prevent the discovery of one clandestine alliance, operating prejudicially on the others. Hence, the mystification of Mr. Calton and Mr. Septimus Hicks, and the præengagement of the unwary Tibbs.

On the following morning, Mr. Septimus Hicks was united to Miss Matilda Maplesone. Mr. Simpson also entered into a "holy alliance" with Miss Julia: Tibbs acting as father, "his first appearance in that character." Mr. Calton, not being quite so eager as the two young men, was rather struck by the double discovery; and as he had found some difficulty in getting any one to give the lady away, it occurred to him that the best mode of obviating the inconvenience would be not to take her at all. The lady, however, "appealed," as her counsel said on the trial of the cause, *Maplesone v. Calton*, for a breach of promise, "with a broken heart, to the outraged laws of her country." She recovered damages to the amount of 1000*l.* which the unfortunate knocker was compelled to pay. Mr. Septimus Hicks having walked the hospitals, took it into his head to walk off altogether.

His injured wife is at present residing with her mother at Boulogne. Mr. Simpson, having the misfortune to lose his wife six weeks after marriage (by her eloping with an officer during his temporary sojourn in the Fleet Prison, in consequence of his inability to discharge her little mantua-maker's bill), and being disinherited by his father, who died soon afterwards, was fortunate enough to obtain a permanent engagement at a fashionable hair-cutter's; hairdressing being a science to which he had frequently directed his attention. In this situation he had necessarily many opportunities of making himself acquainted with the habits, and style of thinking, of the exclusive portion of the nobility of this kingdom. To this fortunate circumstance are we indebted for the production of those brilliant efforts of genius, his fashionable novels, which so long as good taste, unsullied by exaggeration, cant, and quackery, continues to exist, cannot fail to instruct and amuse the thinking portion of the community.

It only remains to add, that this complication of disorders completely deprived poor Mrs. Tibbs of all her inmates, except the one whom she could have best spared — her husband. That wretched little man returned home, on the day of the wedding, in a state of partial intoxication; and, under the influence of wine, excitement, and despair, actually dared to brave the anger of his wife. Since that ill-fated hour he has constantly taken his meals in the kitchen, to which apartment, it is understood, his witticisms will be in future confined: a turn-up bedstead having been conveyed there by Mrs. Tibbs's order for his exclusive accommodation. It is possible that he will be enabled to finish, in that seclusion, his story of the volunteers.

The advertisement has again appeared in the morning papers. Results must be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

"WELL!" said little Mrs. Tibbs to herself, as she sat in the front parlor of the Coram Street mansion one morning, mending a piece of stair-carpet off the first landing; — "Things have not turned out so badly, either, and if I only get a favorable answer to the advertisement, we shall be full again."

Mrs. Tibbs resumed her occupation of making worsted lattice-work in the carpet, anxiously listening to the two-penny postman, who was hammering his way down the street, at the rate of a penny a knock. The house was as quiet as possible. There was only one low sound to be heard — it was the unhappy Tibbs cleaning the gentlemen's boots in the back kitchen, and accompanying himself with a buzzing noise, in wretched mockery of humming a tune.

The postman drew near the house. He paused — so did Mrs. Tibbs. A knock — a bustle — a letter — ost-paid.

"T. I. presents compt. to I. T. and T. I. begs To say that i see the advertisement And she will Do Herself the pleasure of calling On you at 12 o'clock to-morrow morning.

"T. I. as To apologise to I. T. for the shortness

Of the notice But i hope it will not inconvenience
you. "I remain yours Truly

"Wednesday evening."

Little Mrs. Tibbs perused the document, over and over again; and the more she read it, the more was she confused by the mixture of the first and third person the substitution of the "I" for the "T. I.;" and transition of the "I. T." to the "you." The writing looked like a skein of thread in a tangle, and the note was ingeniously folded into a perfect square, with the direction squeezed up into the right-hand corner, as if it were ashamed of itself. The back of the epistle was pleasingly ornamented with a large red wafer, which, with the addition of divers ink-stains, bore a marvellous resemblance to a black beetle trodden upon. One thing, however, was perfectly clear to the perplexed Mrs. Tibbs. Somebody was to call at twelve. The drawing-room was forthwith dusted for the third time that morning; three or four chairs were pulled out of their places, and a corresponding number of books carefully upset, in order that there might be a due absence of formality. Down went the piece of stair-carpet before noticed, and up ran Mrs. Tibbs "to make herself tidy."

The clock of New Saint Pancras Church struck twelve, and the Foundling, with laudable politeness, did the same ten minutes afterwards. Saint something else struck the quarter, and then there arrived a single lady with a double knock, in a pelisse the color of the interior of a damson pie; a bonnet of the same, with a regular conservatory of artificial flowers; a white veil, and a green parasol, with a cobweb border.

The visitor (who was very fat and red-faced) was

shown into the drawing-room; Mrs. Tibbs presented herself, and the negotiation commenced.

"I called in consequence of an advertisement," said the stranger, in a voice as if she had been playing a set of Pan's pipes for a fortnight without leaving off.

"Yes!" said Mrs. Tibbs, rubbing her hands very slowly, and looking the applicant full in the face — two things she always did on such occasions.

"Money isn't no object whatever to me," said the lady, "so much as living in a state of retirement and obtrusion."

Mrs. Tibbs, as a matter of course, acquiesced in such an exceedingly natural desire.

"I am constantly attended by a medical man," resumed the pelisse wearer; "I have been a shocking unitarian for some time — I, indeed, have had very little peace since the death of Mr. Bloss."

Mrs. Tibbs looked at the relict of the departed Bloss, and thought he must have had very little peace in his time. Of course she could not say so; so she looked very sympathizing.

"I shall be a good deal of trouble to you," said Mrs. Bloss; "but, for that trouble I am willing to pay. I am going through a course of treatment which renders attention necessary. I have one mutton chop in bed at half-past eight, and another at ten, every morning."

Mrs. Tibbs, as in duty bound, expressed the pity she felt for anybody placed in such a distressing situation; and the carnivorous Mrs. Bloss proceeded to arrange the various preliminaries with wonderful despatch. "Now mind," said that lady, after terms were arranged; "I am to have the second-floor front, for my bedroom?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"And you'll find room for my little servant Agnes?"

"Oh! certainly."

"And I can have one of the cellars in the area for my bottled porter."

"With the greatest pleasure;—James shall get it ready for you by Saturday."

"And I'll join the company at the breakfast-table on Sunday morning," said Mrs. Bloss. "I shall get up on purpose."

"Very well," returned Mrs. Tibbs, in her most amiable tone; for satisfactory references had "been given and required," and it was quite certain that the new comer had plenty of money. "It's rather singular," continued Mrs. Tibbs, with what was meant for a most bewitching smile, "that we have a gentleman now with us, who is in a very delicate state of health—a Mr. Gobler.—His apartment is the back drawing-room."

"The next room?" inquired Mrs. Bloss.

"The next room," repeated the hostess.

"How very promiscuous!" ejaculated the widow.

"He hardly ever gets up," said Mrs. Tibbs, in a whisper.

"Lor!" cried Mrs. Bloss, in an equally low tone.

"And when he is up," said Mrs. Tibbs, "we never can persuade him to go to bed again."

"Dear me!" said the astonished Mrs. Bloss, drawing her chair nearer Mrs. Tibbs. "What is his complaint?"

"Why, the fact is," replied Mrs. Tibbs, with a most communicative air, "he has no stomach whatever."

"No what?" inquired Mrs. Bloss, with a look of the most indescribable alarm.

"No stomach," repeated Mrs. Tibbs, with a shake of the head.

"Lord bless us! what an extraordinary case!" gasped Mrs. Bloss, as if she understood the communication in its literal sense, and was astonished at a gentleman without a stomach finding it necessary to board anywhere.

"When I say he has no stomach," explained the chatty little Mrs. Tibbs, "I mean that his digestion is so much impaired, and his interior so deranged, that his stomach is not of the least use to him;—in fact, it's an inconvenience."

"Never heard such a case in my life!" exclaimed Mrs. Bloss. "Why, he's worse than I am."

"Oh, yes!" replied Mrs. Tibbs;—"certainly." She said this with great confidence, for the damson pelisse suggested that Mrs. Bloss, at all events, was not suffering under Mr. Gobler's complaint.

"You have quite incited my curiosity," said Mrs. Bloss, as she rose to depart. "How I long to see him!"

"He generally comes down, once a week," replied Mrs. Tibbs; "I dare say you'll see him on Sunday." With this consolatory promise Mrs. Bloss was obliged to be contented. She accordingly walked slowly down the stairs, detailing her complaints all the way; and Mrs. Tibbs followed her, uttering an exclamation of compassion at every step. James (who looked very gritty, for he was cleaning the knives) fell up the kitchen-stairs, and opened the street-door; and, after mutual farewells, Mrs. Bloss slowly departed, down the shady side of the street.

It is almost superfluous to say, that the lady whom we have just shown out at the street-door (and whom the two female servants are now inspecting from the second-floor windows) was exceedingly vulgar, ignorant, and

selfish. Her deceased better-half had been an eminent cork-cutter, in which capacity he had amassed a decent fortune. He had no relative but his nephew, and no friend but his cook. The former had the insolence one morning to ask for the loan of fifteen pounds; and, by way of retaliation, he married the latter next day; he made a will immediately afterwards, containing a burst of honest indignation against his nephew (who supported himself and two sisters on 100*l.* a year), and a bequest of his whole property to his wife. He felt ill after breakfast, and died after dinner. There is a mantelpiece-looking tablet in a civic parish church, setting forth his virtues, and deploring his loss. He never dishonored a bill, or gave away a halfpenny.

The relict and sole executrix of this noble-minded man was an odd mixture of shrewdness and simplicity, liberality and meanness. Bred up as she had been, she knew no mode of living so agreeable as a boarding-house; and having nothing to do, and nothing to wish for, she naturally imagined she must be very ill — an impression which was most assiduously promoted by her medical attendant, Dr. Wosky, and her handmaid Agnes: both of whom, doubtless for good reasons, encouraged all her extravagant notions.

Since the catastrophe recorded in the last chapter, Mrs. Tibbs had been very shy of young-lady boarders. Her present inmates were all lords of the creation, and he availed herself of the opportunity of their assemblage at the dinner-table, to announce the expected arrival of Mrs. Bloss. The gentlemen received the communication with stoical indifference, and Mrs. Tibbs devoted all her energies to prepare for the reception of the valetudinarian. The second-floor front was scrubbed,

and washed, and flannelled, till the wet went through to the drawing-room ceiling. Clean white counterpanes, and curtains, and napkins, water-bottles as clear as crystal, blue jugs, and mahogany furniture, added to the splendor, and increased the comfort, of the apartment. The warming-pan was in constant requisition, and a fire lighted in the room every day. The chattels of Mrs. Bloss were forwarded by instalments. First, there came a large hamper of Guinness's stout, and an umbrella; then, a train of trunks; then, a pair of clogs and a band-box; then, an easy-chair with an air-cushion; then, a variety of suspicious-looking packages; and—"though last not least"—Mrs. Bloss and Agnes: the latter in a cherry-colored merino dress, open-work stockings, and shoes with sandals: like a disguised Columbine.

The installation of the Duke of Wellington, as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, was nothing, in point of bustle and turmoil, to the installation of Mrs. Bloss in her new quarters. True, there was no bright doctor of civil law to deliver a classical address on the occasion; but there were several other old women present, who spoke quite as much to the purpose, and understood themselves equally well. The chop-eater was so fatigued with the process of removal that she declined leaving her room until the following morning; so a mutton-chop, pickle, a pill, a pint bottle of stout, and other medicines, were carried up-stairs for her consumption.

"Why, what *do* you think, ma'am?" inquired the inquisitive Agnes of her mistress, after they had been in the house some three hours; "what *do* you think, ma'am? the lady of the house is married."

"Married!" said Mrs. Bloss, taking the pill and a draught of Guinness—"married! Impossible!"

"She is indeed, ma'am," returned the Columbine "and her husband, ma'am, lives — he — he — he — lives in the kitchen, ma'am."

"In the kitchen!"

"Yes, ma'am; and he — he — he — the housemaid says, he never goes into the parlor except on Sundays; and that Mrs. Tibbs makes him clean the gentlemen's boots; and that he cleans the windows, too, sometimes; and that one morning early, when he was in the front balcony cleaning the drawing-room windows, he called out to a gentleman on the opposite side of the way, who used to live here — 'Ah! Mr. Calton, sir, how are you?'" Here the attendant laughed till Mrs. Bloss was in serious apprehension of her chuckling herself into a fit.

"Well, I never!" said Mrs. Bloss.

"Yes. And please, ma'am, the servants gives him gin-and-water sometimes; and then he cries, and says he hates his wife and the boarders, and wants to tickle them."

"Tickle the boarders!" exclaimed Mrs. Bloss, seriously alarmed.

"No, ma'am, not the boarders, the servants."

"Oh, is that all!" said Mrs. Bloss, quite satisfied.

"He wanted to kiss me as I came up the kitchen-stairs, just now," said Agnes, indignantly; "but I gave it him — a little wrench!"

This intelligence was but too true. A long course of snubbing and neglect; his days spent in the kitchen, and his nights in the turn-up bedstead, had completely broken the little spirit that the unfortunate volunteer had ever possessed. He had no one to whom he could detail his injuries but the servants, and they were almost of neces-

sity his chosen confidants. It is no less strange than true, however, that the little weaknesses which he had incurred, most probably during his military career, seemed to increase as his comforts diminished. He was actually a sort of journeyman Giovanni of the basement story.

The next morning, being Sunday, breakfast was laid in the front parlor at ten o'clock. Nine was the usual time, but the family always breakfasted an hour later on Sabbath. Tibbs enrobed himself in his Sunday costume — a black coat, and exceedingly short, thin trousers ; with a very large white waistcoat, white stockings and cravat, and Blucher boots — and mounted to the parlor aforesaid. Nobody had come down, and he amused himself by drinking the contents of the milkpot with a teaspoon.

A pair of slippers were heard descending the stairs. Tibbs flew to a chair ; and a stern-looking man, of about fifty, with very little hair on his head, and a Sunday paper in his hand, entered the room.

"Good morning, Mr. Evenson," said Tibbs, very humbly, with something between a nod and bow.

"How do you do, Mr. Tibbs?" replied he of the slippers, as he sat himself down, and began to read his paper without saying another word.

"Is Mr. Wisbottle in town to-day, do you know, sir?" inquired Tibbs, just for the sake of saying something.

"I should think he was," replied the stern gentleman. 'He was whistling 'The Light Guitar,' in the next room to mine, at five o'clock this morning."

"He's very fond of whistling," said Tibbs, with a slight smirk.

"Yes — I a'n't," was the laconic reply.

Mr. John Evenson was in the receipt of an independent income, arising chiefly from various houses he owned in the different suburbs. He was very morose and discontented. He was a thorough radical, and used to attend a great variety of public meetings, for the express purpose of finding fault with everything that was proposed. Mr. Wisbottle, on the other hand, was a high Tory. He was a clerk in the Woods and Forests Office, which he considered rather an aristocratic employment; he knew the peerage by heart, and could tell you, off-hand, where any illustrious personage lived. He had a good set of teeth, and a capital tailor. Mr. Evenson looked on all these qualifications with profound contempt; and the consequence was that the two were always disputing, much to the edification of the rest of the house. It should be added, that, in addition to his partiality for whistling, Mr. Wisbottle had a great idea of his singing powers. There were two other boarders, besides the gentleman in the back drawing-room — Mr. Alfred Tomkins and Mr. Frederick O'Bleary. Mr. Tomkins was a clerk in a wine-house; he was a connoisseur in paintings, and had a wonderful eye for the picturesque. Mr. O'Bleary was an Irishman, recently imported; he was in a perfectly wild state; and had come over to England to be an apothecary, a clerk in a government office, an actor, a reporter, or anything else that turned up — he was not particular. He was on familiar terms with two small Irish members, and got franks for everybody in the house. He felt convinced that his intrinsic merits must procure him a high destiny. He wore shepherd's-plaid inexpressibles, and used to look under all the ladies' bonnets as he walked along the streets. His manners and appearance reminded one of Orson.

"Here comes Mr. Wisbottle," said Tibbs; and Mr. Wisbottle forthwith appeared in blue slippers, and a shawl dressing-gown, whistling "*Di piacer*."

"Good morning, sir," said Tibbs again. It was almost the only thing he ever said to anybody.

"How are you, Tibbs?" condescendingly replied the amateur; and he walked to the window, and whistled louder than ever.

"Pretty air, that!" said Evenson, with a snarl, and without taking his eyes off the paper.

"Glad you like it," replied Wisbottle, highly gratified.

"Don't you think it would sound better, if you whistled it a little louder?" inquired the mastiff.

"No; I don't think it would," rejoined the unconscious Wisbottle.

"I'll tell you what, Wisbottle," said Evenson, who had been bottling up his anger for some hours — "the next time you feel disposed to whistle 'The Light Guitar' at five o'clock in the morning, I'll trouble you to whistle it with your head out o' window. If you don't, I'll learn the triangle — I will by —"

The entrance of Mrs. Tibbs (with the keys in a little basket) interrupted the threat, and prevented its conclusion.

Mrs. Tibbs apologized for being down rather late; the bell was rung; James brought up the urn, and received an unlimited order for dry toast and bacon. Tibbs sat down at the bottom of the table, and began eating water-cresses like a Nebuchadnezzar. Mr. O'Bleary appeared, and Mr. Alfred Tomkins. The compliments of the morning were exchanged, and the tea was made.

"God bless me!" exclaimed Tomkins, who had been

looking out at the window. "Here — Wisbottle — pray come here — make haste."

Mr. Wisbottle started from the table, and every one looked up.

"Do you see," said the connoisseur, placing Wisbottle in the right position — "a little more this way: there — do you see how splendidly the light falls upon the left side of that broken chimney-pot at No. 48?"

"Dear me! I see," replied Wisbottle, in a tone of admiration.

"I never saw an object stand out so beautifully against the clear sky in my life," ejaculated Alfred. Everybody (except John Evenson) echoed the sentiment; for Mr. Tomkins had a great character for finding out beauties which no one else could discover — he certainly deserved it.

"I have frequently observed a chimney-pot in College Green, Dublin, which has a much better effect," said the patriotic O'Bleary, who never allowed Ireland to be outdone on any point.

The assertion was received with obvious incredulity, for Mr. Tomkins declared that no other chimney-pot in the United Kingdom, broken or unbroken, could be so beautiful as the one at No. 48.

The room-door was suddenly thrown open, and Agnes appeared leading in Mrs. Bloss, who was dressed in a geranium-colored muslin gown, and displayed a gold watch of huge dimensions; a chain to match; and a splendid assortment of rings, with enormous stones. A general rush was made for a chair, and a regular introduction took place. Mr. John Evenson made a slight inclination of the head; Mr. Frederick O'Bleary, Mr. Alfred Tomkins, and Mr. Wisbottle, bowed like the man-

darins in a grocer's shop ; Tibbs rubbed hands, and went round in circles. He was observed to close one eye, and to assume a clock-work sort of expression with the other ; this has been considered as a wink, and it has been reported that Agnes was its object. We repel the calumny, and challenge contradiction.

Mrs. Tibbs inquired after Mrs. Bloss's health in a low tone. Mrs. Bloss, with a supreme contempt for the memory of Lindley Murray, answered the various questions in a most satisfactory manner ; and a pause ensued, during which the eatables disappeared with awful rapidity.

"You must have been very much pleased with the appearance of the ladies going to the drawing-room the other day, Mr. O'Bleary ?" said Mrs. Tibbs, hoping to start a topic.

"Yes," replied Orson, with a mouthful of toast.

"Never saw anything like it before, I suppose ?" suggested Wisbottle.

"No — except the Lord Lieutenant's levees," replied O'Bleary.

"Are they at all equal to our drawing-rooms ?"

"Oh, infinitely superior !"

"Gad ! I don't know," said the aristocratic Wisbottle, "the Dowager Marchioness of Publiccash was most magnificently dressed, and so was the Baron Slappenbachhausen."

"What was he presented on ?" inquired Everson.

"On his arrival in England."

"I thought so," growled the radical ; "you never hear of these fellows being presented on their going away again. They know better than that."

"Unless somebody pervades them with an apint-

ment," said Mrs. Bloss, joining in the conversation in a faint voice.

"Well," said Wisbottle, evading the point, "it's a splendid sight."

"And did it never occur to you," inquired the radical, who never would be quiet; "did it never occur to you, that you pay for these precious ornaments of society?"

"It certainly *has* occurred to me," said Wisbottle, who thought this answer was a poser; "it *has* occurred to me, and I am willing to pay for them."

"Well, and it has occurred to me too," replied John Evenson, "and I a'n't willing to pay for 'em. Then why should I? — I say, why should I?" continued the politician, laying down the paper, and knocking his knuckles on the table. "There are two great principles — demand —"

"A cup of tea if you please, dear," interrupted Tibbs.

"And supply —"

"May I trouble you to hand this tea to Mr. Tibbs?" said Mrs. Tibbs, interrupting the argument, and unconsciously illustrating it.

The thread of the orator's discourse was broken. He drank his tea and resumed the paper.

"If it's very fine," said Mr. Alfred Tomkins, addressing the company in general, "I shall ride down to Richmond to-day, and come back by the steamer. There are some splendid effects of light and shade on the Thames; the contrast between the blueness of the sky and the yellow water is frequently exceedingly beautiful." Mr. Wisbottle hummed, "Flow on, thou shining river."

"We have some splendid steam-vessels in Ireland," said O'Bleary.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Bloss, delighted to find a subject broached in which she could take part.

"The accommodations are extraordinary," said O'Bleary.

"Extraordinary indeed," returned Mrs. Bloss. "When Mr. Bloss was alive, he was promiscuously obligated to go to Ireland on business. I went with him, and rally the manner in which the ladies and gentlemen were accommodated with berths, is not creditable."

Tibbs, who had been listening to the dialogue, looked aghast, and evinced a strong inclination to ask a question, but was checked by a look from his wife. Mr. Wisbottle laughed, and said Tomkins had made a pun ; and Tomkins laughed too, and said he had not.

The remainder of the meal passed off as breakfasts usually do. Conversation flagged, and people played with their tea-spoons. The gentlemen looked out at the window ; walked about the room ; and, when they got near the door, dropped off one by one. Tibbs retired to the back parlor by his wife's orders, to check the green-grocer's weekly account ; and ultimately Mrs. Tibbs and Mrs. Bloss were left alone together.

"Oh dear !" said the latter, "I feel alarmingly faint ; it's very singular." (It certainly was, for she had eaten four pounds of solids that morning.) "By the by," said Mrs. Bloss, "I have not seen Mr. What's his name yet."

"Mr. Gobler ?" suggested Mrs. Tibbs.

"Yes."

"Oh !" said Mrs. Tibbs, "he is a most mysterious person. He has his meals regularly sent up-stairs, and sometimes don't leave his room for weeks together."

"I haven't seen or heard nothing of him," repeated Mrs. Bloss.

"I dare say you'll hear him to-night," replied Mrs. Tibbs; "he generally groans a good deal on Sunday evenings."

"I never felt such an interest in any one in my life," ejaculated Mrs. Bloss. A little double-knock interrupted the conversation; Doctor Wosky was announced, and duly shown in. He was a little man with a red face, — dressed of course in black, with a stiff white neckerchief. He had a very good practice, and plenty of money, which he had amassed by invariably humoring the worst fancies of all the females of all the families he had ever been introduced into. Mrs. Tibbs offered to retire, but was entreated to stay.

"Well, my dear ma'am, and how are we?" inquired Wosky, in a soothing tone.

"Very ill, doctor — very ill," said Mrs. Bloss, in a whisper.

"Ah! we must take care of ourselves; — we must, indeed," said the obsequious Wosky, as he felt the pulse of his interesting patient.

"How is our appetite?"

Mrs. Bloss shook her head.

"Our friend requires great care," said Wosky, appealing to Mrs. Tibbs, who of course assented. "I hope, however, with the blessing of Providence, that we shall be enabled to make her quite stout again." Mrs. Tibbs wondered in her own mind what the patient would be when she was made quite stout.

"We must take stimulants," said the cunning Wosky — "plenty of nourishment, and, above all, we must keep our nerves quiet; we positively must not give way to our sensibilities. We must take all we can get," concluded the doctor, as he pocketed his fee, "and we must keep quiet."

"Dear man!" exclaimed Mrs. Bloss, as the doctor stepped into his carriage.

"Charming creature indeed — quite a lady's man!" said Mrs. Tibbs, and Doctor Wosky rattled away to make fresh gulls of delicate females, and pocket fresh fees.

As we had occasion, in a former paper, to describe a dinner at Mrs. Tibbs's; and as one meal went off very like another on all ordinary occasions; we will not fatigue our readers by entering into any other detailed account of the domestic economy of the establishment. We will therefore proceed to events, merely premising that the mysterious tenant of the back drawing-room was a lazy, selfish hypochondriac; always complaining and never ill. As his character in many respects closely assimilated to that of Mrs. Bloss, a very warm friendship soon sprang up between them. He was tall, thin, and pale; he always fancied he had a severe pain somewhere or other, and his face invariably wore a pinched, screwed-up expression; he looked, indeed, like a man who had got his feet in a tub of exceedingly hot water, against his will.

For two or three months after Mrs. Bloss's first appearance in Coram Street, John Evenson was observed to become, every day, more sarcastic, and more ill-natured; and there was a degree of additional importance in his manner, which clearly showed that he fancied he had discovered something, which he only wanted a proper opportunity of divulging. He found it at last.

One evening, the different inmates of the house were assembled in the drawing-room engaged in their ordinary occupations. Mr. Goble and Mrs. Bloss were sitting at

a small card-table near the centre window, playing cribbage ; Mr. Wisbottle was describing semicircles on the music-stool, turning over the leaves of a book on the piano, and humming most melodiously ; Alfred Tomkins was sitting at the round table, with his elbows duly squared, making a pencil sketch of a head considerably larger than his own ; O'Bleary was reading Horace, and trying to look as if he understood it ; and John Evenson had drawn his chair close to Mrs. Tibbs's work-table, and was talking to her very earnestly in a low tone.

"I can assure you, Mrs. Tibbs," said the radical, laying his forefinger on the muslin she was at work on ; "I can assure you, Mrs. Tibbs, that nothing but the interest I take in your welfare would induce me to make this communication. I repeat, I fear Wisbottle is endeavoring to gain the affections of that young woman, Agnes, and that he is in the habit of meeting her in the store-room on the first floor, over the leads. From my bedroom I distinctly heard voices there, last night. I opened my door immediately, and crept very softly on to the landing : there I saw Mr. Tibbs, who, it seems, had been disturbed also. — Bless me, Mrs. Tibbs, you change color !"

"No, no — it's nothing," returned Mrs. T. in a hurried manner ; "it's only the heat of the room."

"A flush !" ejaculated Mrs. Bloss from the card-table ; "that's good for four."

"If I thought it was Mr. Wisbottle," said Mrs. Tibbs, after a pause, "he should leave this house instantly."

"Go !" said Mrs. Bloss again.

"And if I thought," continued the hostess with a most threatening air, "if I thought he was assisted by Mr Tibbs —"

"One for his nob!" said Gobler.

"Oh," said Evenson, in a most soothing tone — he liked to make mischief — "I should hope Mr. Tibbs was not in any way implicated. He always appeared to me very harmless."

"I have generally found him so," sobbed poor little Mrs. Tibbs; crying like a watering-pot.

"Hush! hush! pray — Mrs. Tibbs — consider — we shall be observed — pray, don't!" said John Evenson, fearing his whole plan would be interrupted. "We will set the matter at rest with the utmost care, and I shall be most happy to assist you in doing so."

Mrs. Tibbs murmured her thanks.

"When you think every one has retired to rest to-night," said Evenson very pompously, "if you'll meet me without a light, just outside my bedroom-door, by the staircase-window, I think we can ascertain who the parties really are, and you will afterwards be enabled to proceed as you think proper."

Mrs. Tibbs was easily persuaded; her curiosity was excited, her jealousy was roused, and the arrangement was forthwith made. She resumed her work, and John Evenson walked up and down the room with his hands in his pockets, looking as if nothing had happened. The game of cribbage was over, and conversation began again.

"Well, Mr. O'Bleary," said the humming-top, turning round on his pivot, and facing the company, "what did you think of Vauxhall the other night?"

"Oh, it's very fair," replied Orson, who had been enthusiastically delighted with the whole exhibition.

"Never saw anything like that Captain Ross's set-out — eh?"

"No," returned the patriot, with his usual reservation — "except in Dublin."

"I saw the Count de Canky and Captain Fitzthompson in the Gardens," said Wisbottle; "they appeared much delighted."

"Then it *must* be beautiful," snarled Evenson.

"I think the white bears is partickerlerly well done," suggested Mrs. Bloss. "In their shaggy white coats they look just like Polar bears — don't you think they do, Mr. Evenson?"

"I think they look a great deal more like omnibus cads on all fours," replied the discontented one.

"Upon the whole, I should have liked our evening very well," gasped Gobler; "only I caught a desperate cold which increased my pain dreadfully! I was obliged to have several shower-baths, before I could leave my room."

"Capital things those shower-baths!" ejaculated Wisbottle.

"Excellent!" said Tomkins.

"Delightful!" chimed in O'Bleary. (He had once seen one outside a tinman's.)

"Disgusting machines!" rejoined Evenson, who extended his dislike to almost every created object, masculine, feminine, or neuter.

"Disgusting, Mr. Evenson!" said Gobler, in a tone of strong indignation. — "Disgusting! Look at their utility — consider how many lives they have saved by promoting perspiration."

"Promoting perspiration, indeed," growled John Evenson, stopping short in his walk across the large squares in the pattern of the carpet — "I was ass enough to be persuaded some time ago to have one in my bedroom.

Gad, I was in it once, and it effectually cured *me*, for the mere sight of it threw me into a profuse perspiration for six months afterwards."

A titter followed this announcement, and before it had subsided James brought up "the tray," containing the remains of a leg of lamb which had made its *début* at dinner; bread; cheese; an atom of butter in a forest of parsley; one pickled walnut and the third of another, and so forth. The boy disappeared, and returned again with another tray, containing glasses and jugs of hot and cold water. The gentlemen brought in their spirit bottles; the housemaid placed divers plated bedroom candlesticks under the card-table; and the servants retired for the night.

Chairs were drawn round the table, and the conversation proceeded in the customary manner. John Evenson, who never ate supper, lolled on the sofa, and amused himself by contradicting everybody. O'Bleary ate as much as he could conveniently carry, and Mrs. Tibbs felt a due degree of indignation thereat; Mr. Gobler and Mrs. Bloss conversed most affectionately on the subject of pill-taking and other innocent amusements: and Tomkins and Wisbottle "got into an argument;" that is to say, they both talked very loudly and vehemently, each flattering himself that he had got some advantage about something, and neither of them having more than a very indistinct idea of what they were talking about. An hour or two passed away; and the boarders and the brass candlesticks retired in pairs to their respective bedrooms. John Evenson pulled off his boots, locked his door, and determined to sit up until Mr. Gobler had retired. He always sat in the drawing-room an hour after everybody else had left it, taking medicine, and groaning.

Great Coram Street was hushed into a state of profound repose: it was nearly two o'clock. A hackney coach now and then rumbled slowly by; and occasionally some stray lawyer's clerk, on his way home to Somers' Town, struck his iron heel on the top of the coal-cellar with a noise resembling the click of a smoke-jack. A low, monotonous, gushing sound was heard, which added considerably to the romantic dreariness of the scene. It was the water "coming in" at number eleven.

"He must be asleep by this time," said John Evenson to himself after waiting with exemplary patience for nearly an hour after Mr. Gobler had left the drawing-room. He listened for a few moments; the house was perfectly quiet; he extinguished his rushlight, and opened his bedroom-door. The staircase was so dark that it was impossible to see anything.

"S—s—s!" whispered the mischief-maker, making a noise like the first indication a Catherine-wheel gives of the probability of its going off.

"Hush;" whispered somebody else.

"Is that you, Mrs. Tibbs?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where?"

"Here;" and the misty outline of Mrs. Tibbs appeared at the staircase window like the ghost of Queen Anne in the tent scene in Richard.

"This way, Mrs. Tibbs," whispered the delighted busybody: "give me your hand — there! Whoever these people are, they are in the store-room now, for I have been looking down from my window, and I could see that they accidentally upset their candlestick, and are now in darkness. You have no shoes on, have you?"

"No," said little Mrs. Tibbs, who could hardly speak for trembling.

"Well; I have taken my boots off, so we can go down, close to the storeroom-door, and listen over the panisters;" and down-stairs they both crept accordingly, every board creaking like a patent mangle on a Saturday afternoon.

"It's Wisbottle and somebody, I'll swear," exclaimed the radical, in an energetic whisper, when they had listened for a few moments.

"Hush — pray let's hear what they say!" exclaimed Mrs. Tibbs, the gratification of whose curiosity was now paramount to every other consideration.

"Ah! if I could but believe you," said a female voice coquettishly, "I'd be bound to settle my missis for life."

"What does she say?" inquired Mr. Evenson, who was not quite so well situated as his companion.

"She says she'll settle her missis's life," replied Mrs. Tibbs. "The wretch! they're plotting murder."

"I know you want money," continued the voice, which belonged to Agnes; "and if you'd secure me the five hundred pound, I warrant she should take fire soon enough."

"What's that?" inquired Evenson again. He could just hear enough to want to hear more.

"I think she says she'll set the house on fire," replied the affrighted Mrs. Tibbs. "But thank God I'm insured in the Phoenix!"

"The moment I have secured your mistress, my dear," said a man's voice, in a strong Irish brogue, "you may depend on having the money."

"Bless my soul, it's Mr. O'Bleary!" exclaimed Mrs. Tibbs, in a parenthesis.

"The villain!" said the indignant Mr. Evenson.

"The first thing to be done," continued the Hibernian, "is to poison Mr. Gobler's mind."

"Oh, certainly;" returned Agnes.

"What's that?" inquired Evenson again, in an agony of curiosity and a whisper.

"He says she's to mind and poison Mr. Gobler," replied Mrs. Tibbs, aghast at this sacrifice of human life.

"And in regard of Mrs. Tibbs," continued O'Bleary. — Mrs. Tibbs shuddered.

"Hush!" exclaimed Agnes, in a tone of the greatest alarm, just as Mrs. Tibbs was on the extreme verge of a fainting-fit. "Hush!"

"Hush!" exclaimed Evenson, at the same moment to Mrs. Tibbs.

"There's somebody coming *up* stairs," said Agnes to O'Bleary.

"There's somebody coming *down* stairs," whispered Evenson to Mrs. Tibbs.

"Go into the parlor, sir," said Agnes to her companion. "You will get there, before whoever it is, gets to the top of the kitchen-stairs."

"The drawing-room, Mrs. Tibbs!" whispered the astonished Evenson to his equally astonished companion; and for the drawing-room they both made, plainly hearing the rustling of two persons, one coming down stairs, and one coming up.

"What can it be?" exclaimed Mrs. Tibbs. "It's like a dream. I wouldn't be found in this situation for the world!"

"Nor I," returned Evenson, who could never bear a joke at his own expense. "Hush! here they are at the door."

"What fun?" whispered one of the new-comers. — It was Wisbottle.

"Glorious!" replied his companion, in an equally low tone. — This was Alfred Tomkins. "Who would have thought it?"

"I told you so," said Wisbottle, in a most knowing whisper. "Lord bless you, he has paid her most extraordinary attention for the last two months. I saw 'em when I was sitting at the piano to-night."

"Well, do you know I didn't notice it?" interrupted Tomkins.

"Not notice it!" continued Wisbottle. "Bless you; I saw him whispering to her, and she crying; and then I'll swear I heard him say something about to-night when we were all in bed."

"They're talking of *us*!" exclaimed the agonized Mrs. Tibbs, as the painful suspicion, and a sense of their situation, flashed upon her mind.

"I know it — I know it," replied Evenson, with a melancholy consciousness that there was no mode of escape.

"What's to be done? we cannot both stop here!" ejaculated Mrs. Tibbs, in a state of partial derangement.

"I'll get up the chimney," replied Evenson, who really meant what he said.

"You can't," said Mrs. Tibbs, in despair. "You can't — it's a register stove."

"Hush!" repeated John Evenson.

"Hush — hush!" cried somebody down-stairs.

"What a d—d hushing!" said Alfred Tomkins, who began to get rather bewildered.

"There they are!" exclaimed the sapient Wisbottle, as a rustling noise was heard in the storeroom.

"Hark!" whispered both the young men.

"Hark!" repeated Mrs. Tibbs and Evenson.

"Let me alone, sir," said a female voice in the store-room.

"Oh, Hagnes!" cried another voice, which clearly belonged to Tibbs, for nobody else ever owned one like it. "Oh, Hagnes — lovely creature!"

"Be quiet, sir!" (A bounce.)

"Hag —"

"Be quiet, sir — I am ashamed of you. Think of your wife, Mr. Tibbs. Be quiet, sir?"

"My wife!" exclaimed the valorous Tibbs, who was clearly under the influence of gin-and-water, and a misplaced attachment; "I ate her! Oh, Hagnes! when I was in the volunteer corps, in eighteen hundred and —"

"I declare I'll scream. Be quiet, sir, will you? (Another bounce and a scuffle.)

"What's that?" exclaimed Tibbs, with a start.

"What's what?" said Agnes, stopping short.

"Why, that!"

"Ah! you have done it nicely now, sir," sobbed the frightened Agnes, as a tapping was heard at Mrs. Tibbs' bedroom-door, which would have beaten any dozen woodpeckers hollow.

"Mrs. Tibbs! Mrs. Tibbs!" called out Mrs. Bloss. "Mrs. Tibbs, pray get up." (Here the imitation of a woodpecker was resumed with tenfold violence.)

"Oh, dear — dear!" exclaimed the wretched partner of the depraved Tibbs. "She's knocking at my door. We must be discovered! What will they think?"

"Mrs. Tibbs! Mrs. Tibbs!" screamed the woodpecker again.



George Cruikshank.

"What's the matter!" shouted Gobler, bursting out of the back drawing-room, like the dragon at Astley's.

"Oh, Mr. Gobler!" cried Mrs. Bloss, with a proper approximation to hysterics; "I think the house is on fire, or else there's thieves in it. I have heard the most dreadful noises!"

"The devil you have!" shouted Gobler again, bouncing back into his den, in happy imitation of the aforesaid dragon, and returning immediately with a lighted candle. "Why, what's this? Wisbottle! Tomkins! O'Bleary! Agnes! What the deuce! all up and dressed?"

"Astonishing!" said Mrs. Bloss, who had run downstairs, and taken Mr. Gobler's arm.

"Call Mrs. Tibbs directly, somebody," said Gobler, turning into the front drawing-room. "What! Mrs. Tibbs and Mr. Evenson!"

"Mrs. Tibbs and Mr. Evenson!" repeated everybody, as that unhappy pair were discovered: Mrs. Tibbs seated in an arm-chair by the fireplace, and Mr. Evenson standing by her side.

We must leave the scene that ensued to the reader's imagination. We could tell, how Mrs. Tibbs forthwith fainted away, and how it required the united strength of Mr. Wisbottle and Mr. Alfred Tomkins to hold her in her chair; how Mr. Evenson explained, and how his explanation was evidently disbelieved; how Agnes repelled the accusations of Mrs. Tibbs, by proving that she was negotiating with Mr. O'Bleary to influence her mistress's affections in his behalf; and how Mr. Gobler threw a damp counterpane on the hopes of Mr. O'Bleary by avowing that he (Gobler) had already proposed to, and been accepted by, Mrs. Bloss; how Agnes was discharged from that lady's service; how Mr. O'Bleary discharged

himself from Mrs. Tibbs's house, without going through the form of previously discharging his bill; and how that disappointed young gentleman rails against England and the English, and vows there is no virtue or fine feeling extant, "except in Ireland." We repeat that we *could* tell all this, but we love to exercise our self-denial, and we therefore prefer leaving it to be imagined.

The lady whom we have hitherto described as Mrs. Bloss, is no more. Mrs. Gobler exists; Mrs. Bloss has left us forever. In a secluded retreat in Newington Butts, far, far, removed from the noisy strife of that great boarding-house, the world, the enviable Gobler and his pleasing wife revel in retirement; happy in their complaints, their table, and their medicine; wafted through life by the grateful prayers of all the purveyors of animal food within three miles round.

We would willingly stop here, but we have a painful duty imposed upon us which we must discharge. Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs have separated by mutual consent, Mrs. Tibbs receiving one moiety of 43*l.* 15*s.* 10*d.*, which we before stated to be the amount of her husband's annual income, and Mr Tibbs the other. He is spending the evening of his days in retirement; and he is spending also, annually, that small but honorable independence. He resides among the original settlers at Walworth; and it has been stated, on unquestionable authority, that the conclusion of the volunteer story has been heard in a small tavern in that respectable neighborhood.

The unfortunate Mrs. Tibbs has determined to dispose of the whole of her furniture by public auction, and to retire from a residence in which she has suffered so much. Mr. Robins has been applied to, to conduct the sale, and the transcendent abilities of the literary gentle-

men connected with his establishment are now devoted to the task of drawing up the preliminary advertisement. It is to contain, among a variety of brilliant matter, seventy-eight words in large capitals, and six original quotations in inverted commas.

CHAPTER II.

MR. MINNS AND HIS COUSIN.

MR. AUGUSTUS MINNS was a bachelor, of about forty as he said — of about eight-and-forty as his friends said. He was always exceedingly clean, precise, and tidy; perhaps somewhat priggish, and the most retiring man in the world. He usually wore a brown frock-coat without a wrinkle, light inexplicables without a spot, a neat neckerchief with a remarkably neat tie, and boots without a fault; moreover, he always carried a brown silk umbrella with an ivory handle. He was a clerk in Somerset House, or, as he said himself, he held “a responsible situation under Government.” He had a good and increasing salary, in addition to some 10,000*l.* of his own (invested in the funds), and he occupied a first floor in Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, where he had resided for twenty years, having been in the habit of quarrelling with his landlord the whole time: regularly giving notice of his intention to quit on the first day of every quarter, and as regularly countermanding it on the second. There were two classes of created objects which he held in the deepest and most unmingled horror; these were dogs

and children. He was not unamiable, but he could, at any time, have viewed the execution of a dog, or the assassination of an infant, with the liveliest satisfaction. Their habits were at variance with his love of order; and his love of order was as powerful as his love of life. Mr. Augustus Minns had no relations, in or near London, with the exception of his cousin, Mr. Octavius Budden, to whose son, whom he had never seen (for he disliked the father) he had consented to become godfather by proxy. Mr. Budden having realized a moderate fortune by exercising the trade or calling of a corn-chandler, and having a great predilection for the country, had purchased a cottage in the vicinity of Stamford Hill, whither he retired with the wife of his bosom, and his only son, Master Alexander Augustus Budden. One evening, as Mr. and Mrs. B. were admiring their son, discussing his various merits, talking over his education, and disputing whether the classics should be made an essential part thereof, the lady pressed so strongly upon her husband the propriety of cultivating the friendship of Mr. Minns in behalf of their son, that Mr. Budden at last made up his mind, that it should not be his fault if he and his cousin were not in future more intimate.

"I'll break the ice, my love," said Mr. Budden, stirring up the sugar at the bottom of his glass of brandy-and-water, and casting a sidelong look at his spouse to see the effect of the announcement of his determination, "by asking Minns down to dine with us, on Sunday."

"Then, pray Budden write to your cousin at once," replied Mrs. Budden. "Who knows, if we could only get him down here, but he might take a fancy to our

Alexander, and leave him his property? — Alick, my dear, take your legs off the rail of the chair!”

“Very true,” said Mr. Budden, musing, “very true, indeed, my love!”

On the following morning, as Mr. Minns was sitting at his breakfast-table, alternately biting his dry toast, and casting a look upon the columns of his morning paper, which he always read from the title to the printer's name, he heard a loud knock at the street-door; which was shortly afterwards followed by the entrance of his servant, who put into his hand a particularly small card, on which was engraven in immense letters “Mr. Octavius Budden, Amelia Cottage, (Mrs. B.'s name was Amelia,) Poplar Walk, Stamford Hill.”

“Budden!” ejaculated Minns, “what can bring that vulgar man here! — say I'm asleep — say I'm out, and shall never be home again — anything to keep him downstairs.”

“But please, sir, the gentleman's coming up,” replied the servant: and the fact was made evident by an appalling creaking of boots on the staircase accompanied by a pattering noise; the cause of which, Minns could not, for the life of him, divine.

“Hem! — show the gentleman in,” said the unfortunate bachelor. Exit servant, and enter Octavius preceded by a large white dog, dressed in a suit of fleecy hosiery, with pink eyes, large ears, and no perceptible tail.

The cause of the pattering on the stairs was but too plain. Mr. Augustus Minns staggered beneath the shock of the dog's appearance.

“My dear fellow, how are you?” said Budden, as he entered.

He always spoke at the top of his voice, and always said the same thing half a dozen times.

"How are you, my hearty?"

"How do you do, Mr. Budden? — pray take a chair!" politely stammered the discomfited Minns.

"Thank you — thank you — well—how are you, eh?"

"Uncommonly well, thank you," said Minns, casting a diabolical look at the dog, who, with his hind legs on the floor, and his fore paws resting on the table, was dragging a bit of bread and butter out of a plate preparatory to devouring it, with the buttered side next the carpet.

"Ah, you rogue!" said Budden to his dog; "you see, Minns, he's like me, always at home, eh, my boy? — Egad, I'm precious hot and hungry! I've walked all the way from Stamford Hill this morning."

"Have you breakfasted?" inquired Minns.

"Oh, no! — came to breakfast with you; so ring the bell, my dear fellow, will you? and let's have another cup and saucer, and the cold ham. — Make myself at home you see!" continued Budden, dusting his boots with a table napkin. "Ha! — ha! — ha! — 'pon my life, I'm hungry."

Minns rang the bell and tried to smile.

"I decidedly never was so hot in my life," continued Octavius, wiping his forehead: "well, but how are you, Minns? 'Pon my soul, you wear capitally!"

"D'ye think so?" said Minns; and he tried another smile.

"'Pon my life, I do!"

"Mrs. B. and — what's his name — quite well?"

"Alick — my son, you mean, never better — never better. But at such a place as we've got at Poplar Walk, you know, he couldn't be ill if he tried. When



I first saw it, by Jove! it looked so knowing, with the front garden, and the green railings, and the brass knocker, and all that — I really thought it was a cut above me.”

“Don’t you think you’d like the ham better,” interrupted Minns, “if you cut it the other way?” He saw, with feelings which it is impossible to describe, that his visitor was cutting or rather maiming the ham, in utter violation of all established rules.

“No, thank ye,” returned Budden, with the most barbarous indifference to crime, “I prefer it this way — it eats short. But I say Minns, when will you come down and see us? You will be delighted with the place; I know you will. Amelia and I were talking about you the other night, and Amelia said — another lump of sugar, please; thank ye — she said, don’t you think you could contrive, my dear, to say to Mr. Minns, in a friendly way — come down, sir — damn the dog! he’s spoiling your curtains, Minns — ha! — ha! — ha!” Minns leaped from his seat as though he had received the discharge from a galvanic battery.

“Come out, sir! — go out, hoo!” cried poor Augustus, keeping nevertheless, at a very respectful distance from the dog; having read of a case of hydrophobia in the paper of that morning. By dint of great exertion, much shouting, and a marvellous deal of poking under the tables with a stick and umbrella, the dog was at last dislodged, and placed on the landing outside the door, where he immediately commenced a most appalling howling; at the same time vehemently scratching the paint off the two nicely varnished bottom panels, until they resembled the interior of a back-gammon board.

“A good dog for the country that!” coolly observed

Budden to the distracted Minns, "but he's not much used to confinement. But now, Minns, when will you come down? I'll take no denial, positively. Let's see, to-day's Thursday. — Will you come on Sunday? We dine at five, don't say no — do."

After a great deal of pressing, Mr. Augustus Minns, driven to despair, accepted the invitation and promised to be at Poplar Walk on the ensuing Sunday, at a quarter before five to the minute.

"Now mind the direction," said Budden: "the coach goes from the Flower Pot, in Bishopsgate Street, every half hour. When the coach stops at the Swan, you'll see, immediately opposite you, a white house."

"Which is your house — I understand," said Minns, wishing to cut short the visit, and the story, at the same time.

"No, no, that's not mine; that's Grogus's, the great ironmonger's. I was going to say — you turn down by the side of the white house till you can't go another step further — mind that! — and then you turn to your right, by some stables — well; close to you, you'll see a wall with 'Beware of the Dog' written on it in large letters — (Minns shuddered) — go along by the side of that wall for about a quarter of a mile — and anybody will show you which is my place."

"Very well — thank ye — good-by."

"Be punctual."

"Certainly: good morning."

"I say, Minns, you've got a card."

"Yes, I have: thank ye." And Mr. Octavius Budden departed, leaving his cousin looking forward to his visit of the following Sunday, with the feelings of a penniless poet to the weekly visit of his Scotch landlady.

Sunday arrived; the sky was bright and clear; crowds of people were hurrying along the streets, intent on their different schemes of pleasure for the day; everything and everybody looked cheerful and happy except Mr. Augustus Minns.

The day was fine, but the heat was considerable; when Mr Minns had fagged up the shady side of Fleet Street, Cheapside, and Threadneedle Street, he had become pretty warm, tolerably dusty, and it was getting late into the bargain. By the most extraordinary good fortune, however, a coach was waiting at the Flower Pot, into which Mr. Augustus Minns got, on the solemn assurance of the cad that the vehicle would start in three minutes — that being the very utmost extremity of time it was allowed to wait by Act of Parliament. A quarter of an hour elapsed, and there were no signs of moving. Minns looked at his watch for the sixth time.

“Coachman, are you going or not?” bawled Mr. Minns, with his head and half his body out of the coach-window.

“Di—rectly sir,” said the coachman, with his hands in his pockets, looking as much unlike a man in a hurry as possible.

“Bill, take them clothes off.” Five minutes more elapsed; at the end of which time the coachman mounted the box, from whence he looked down the street, and up the street, and hailed all the pedestrians for another five minutes.

“Coachman! if you don’t go this moment, I shall get out,” said Mr. Minns, rendered desperate by the lateness of the hour, and the impossibility of being in Poplar Walk at the appointed time.

“Going this minute, sir,” was the reply; — and, ac-

cordingly, the machine trundled on for a couple of hundred yards, and then stopped again. Minns doubled himself up in a corner of the coach, and abandoned himself to his fate, as a child, a mother, a bandbox, and a parasol became his fellow-passengers.

The child was an affectionate and an amiable infant; the little dear mistook Minns for his other parent, and screamed to embrace him.

"Be quiet, dear," said the mamma, restraining the impetuosity of the darling, whose little fat legs were kicking, and stamping, and twining themselves into the most complicated forms in an ecstasy of impatience. "Be quiet, dear, that's not your papa."

"Thank Heaven I am not!" thought Minns, as the first gleam of pleasure he had experienced that morning shone like a meteor through his wretchedness.

Playfulness was agreeably mingled with affection in the disposition of the boy. When satisfied that Mr. Minns was not his parent, he endeavored to attract his notice by scraping his drab trousers with his dirty shoes, poking his chest with his mamma's parasol, and other nameless endearments peculiar to infancy, with which he beguiled the tediousness of the ride, apparently very much to his own satisfaction.

When the unfortunate gentleman arrived at the Swan, he found to his great dismay that it was a quarter past five. The white house, the stables, the "Beware of the Dog," — every landmark was passed with a rapidity not unusual to a gentleman of a certain age when too late for dinner. After the lapse of a few minutes, Mr. Minns found himself opposite a yellow brick house with a green door, brass knocker and door-plate, green window-frames and ditto railings, with "a garden" in front, that is to

ay, a small loose bit of gravelled ground, with one round and two scalene triangular beds, containing a fir-tree, twenty or thirty bulbs, and an unlimited number of mari-golds. The taste of Mr. and Mrs. Budden was further displayed by the appearance of a Cupid on each side of the door, perched upon a heap of large chalk flints, variegated with pink conch-shells. His knock at the door was answered by a stumpy boy, in drab livery, cotton stockings, and high-lows, who, after hanging his hat on one of the dozen brass pegs which ornamented the passage, denominated by courtesy "The Hall," ushered him into a front drawing-room, commanding a very extensive view of the backs of the neighboring houses. The usual ceremony of introduction, and so forth, over, Mr. Minns took his seat: not a little agitated at finding that he was the last comer, and, somehow or other, the Lion of about a dozen people, sitting together in a small drawing-room, getting rid of that most tedious of all time, the time preceding dinner.

"Well, Brogson," said Budden, addressing an elderly gentleman in a black coat, drab knee-breeches, and long gaiters, who, under pretence of inspecting the prints in an Annual, had been engaged in satisfying himself on the subject of Mr. Minns's general appearance, by looking at him over the tops of the leaves — "Well, Brogson, what do Ministers mean to do? Will they go out, or what?"

"Oh — why — really, you know, I'm the last person in the world to ask for news. Your cousin, from his situation, is the most likely person to answer the question."

Mr. Minns assured the last speaker, that although he was in Somerset House, he possessed no official commu-

nication relative to the projects of his Majesty's Ministers. But his remark was evidently received incredulously ; and no further conjectures being hazarded on the subject, a long pause ensued, during which the company occupied themselves in coughing and blowing their noses, until the entrance of Mrs. Budden caused a general rise.

The ceremony of introduction being over, dinner was announced, and down-stairs the party proceeded accordingly — Mr. Minns escorting Mrs. Budden as far as the drawing-room door, but being prevented, by the narrowness of the staircase, from extending his gallantry any farther. The dinner passed off as such dinners usually do. Ever and anon, amidst the clatter of knives and forks, and the hum of conversation, Mr. B.'s voice might be heard, asking a friend to take wine, and assuring him he was glad to see him ; and a great deal of by-play took place between Mrs. B. and the servants, respecting the removal of the dishes, during which her countenance assumed all the variations of a weather-glass, from "stormy" to "set fair."

Upon the dessert and wine being placed on the table, the servant, in compliance with a significant look from Mrs. B., brought down "Master Alexander," habited in a sky-blue suit with silver buttons ; and possessing hair of nearly the same color as the metal. After sundry raises from his mother, and various admonitions as to his behavior from his father, he was introduced to his godfather.

"Well, my little fellow — you are a fine boy, a'n't you?" said Mr. Minns, as happy as a tomtit on birdlime.

"Yes."

"How old are you?"

"Eight, next We'nsday. How old are *you*?"

"Alexander," interrupted his mother, "how dare *you* ask Mr. Minns how old he is!"

"He asked me how old *I* was," said the precocious child, to whom Minns had from that moment internally resolved that he never would bequeath one shilling. As soon as the titter occasioned by the observation had subsided, a little smirking man with red whiskers, sitting at the bottom of the table, who during the whole dinner had been endeavoring to obtain a listener to some stories about Sheridan, called out, with a very patronizing air — "Alick, what part of speech is *be*?"

"A verb."

"That's a good boy," said Mrs. Budden with all a mother's pride. "Now, you know what a verb is?"

"A verb is a word which signifies to be, to do, or to suffer; as, I am — I rule — I am ruled. Give me an apple, Ma."

"I'll give you an apple," replied the man with the red whiskers, who was an established friend of the family, or in other words was always invited by Mrs. Budden, whether Mr. Budden liked it or not, "if you'll tell me what is the meaning of *be*."

"Be?" said the prodigy, after a little hesitation — "an insect that gathers honey."

"No, dear," frowned Mrs. Budden; "B double E is *be* substantive."

"I don't think he knows much yet about *common* substantives," said the smirking gentleman, who thought this an admirable opportunity for letting off a joke. "It's clear he's not very well acquainted with *proper names*. He! He! He!"

"Gentlemen," called out Mr. Budden, from the end of the table, in a stentorian voice, and with a very important air, "will you have the goodness to charge your glasses? I have a toast to propose."

"Hear! hear!" cried the gentlemen, passing the decanters. After they had made the round of the table, Mr. Budden proceeded — "Gentlemen; there is an individual present —"

"Hear! hear!" said the little man with red whiskers.

"*Pray* be quiet, Jones," remonstrated Budden.

"I say, gentlemen, there is an individual present," resumed the host, "in whose society, I am sure we must take great delight — and — and — the conversation of that individual must have afforded to every one present the utmost pleasure." ["Thank Heaven, he does not mean me!" thought Minns, conscious that his diffidence and exclusiveness had prevented his saying above a dozen words since he entered the house.] "Gentlemen, I am but a humble individual myself, and I perhaps ought to apologize for allowing any individual feelings of friendship and affection for the person I allude to, to induce me to venture to rise, to propose the health of that person — a person that I am sure — that is to say, a person whose virtues must endear him to those who know him — and those who have not the pleasure of knowing him, cannot dislike him."

"Hear! hear!" said the company, in a tone of encouragement and approval.

"Gentlemen," continued Budden, "my cousin is a man who — who is a relation of my own." (Hear! hear!) Minns groaned audibly. "Who I am most happy to see here, and who, if he were not here, would certainly have

deprived us of the great pleasure we all feel in seeing him. (Loud cries of hear!) Gentlemen, I feel that I have already trespassed on your attention for too long a time. With every feeling — of — with every sentiment of — of — ”

“ Gratification ” — suggested the friend of the family.

“ — Of gratification, I beg to propose the health of Mr. Minns.”

“ Standing, gentlemen ! ” shouted the indefatigable little man with the whiskers — “ and with the honors. Take your time from me, if you please. Hip ! hip ! hip ! — Za ! — Hip ! hip ! hip ! — Za ! — Hip ! hip ! — Za — a — a ! ”

All eyes were now fixed on the subject of the toast, who by gulping down port-wine at the imminent hazard of suffocation, endeavored to conceal his confusion. After as long a pause as decency would admit, he rose, but, as the newspapers sometimes say in their reports, “ we regret that we were quite unable to give even the substance of the honorable gentleman’s observations.” The words “ present company — honor — present occasion,” and “ great happiness ” — heard occasionally, and repeated at intervals, with a countenance expressive of the utmost confusion and misery, convinced the company that he was making an excellent speech ; and, accordingly, on his resuming his seat, they cried “ Bravo ! ” and manifested tumultuous applause. Jones, who had been long watching his opportunity, then darted up.

“ Budden,” said he, “ will you allow *me* to propose a toast ? ”

“ Certainly,” replied Budden, adding in an undertone to Minns right across the table. “ Devilish sharp fellow that : you’ll be very much pleased with his speech. He

talks equally well on any subject." Minns bowed, and Mr. Jones proceeded : —

" It has on several occasions, in various instances, under many circumstances, and in different companies, fallen to my lot to propose a toast to those by whom, at the time, I have had the honor to be surrounded. I have sometimes, I will cheerfully own — for why should I deny it? — felt the overwhelming nature of the task I have undertaken, and my own utter incapability to do justice to the subject. If such have been my feelings, however, on former occasions, what must they be now — now — under the extraordinary circumstances in which I am placed. (Hear! hear!) To describe my feelings accurately, would be impossible; but I cannot give you a better idea of them, gentlemen, than by referring to a circumstance which happens, oddly enough, to occur to my mind at the moment. On one occasion, when that truly great and illustrious man, Sheridan, was — "

Now, there is no knowing what new villany in the form of a joke would have been heaped on the grave of that very ill-used man, Mr. Sheridan, if the boy in drab had not at that moment entered the room in a breathless state, to report that, as it was a very wet night, the nine o'clock stage had come round, to know whether there was anybody going to town, as, in that case, he (the nine o'clock) had room for one inside.

Mr. Minns started up; and, despite countless exclamations of surprise, and entreaties to stay, persisted in his determination to accept the vacant place. But the brown silk umbrella was nowhere to be found; and as the coachman couldn't wait, he drove back to the Swan, leaving word for Mr. Minns to "run round" and catch him. However, as it did not occur to Mr. Minns for some ten

minutes or so, that he had left the brown silk umbrella with the ivory handle in the other coach, coming down · and, moreover, as he was by no means remarkable for speed, it is no matter of surprise that when he accomplished the feat of “running round” to the Swan, the coach — the last coach — had gone without him.

It was somewhere about three o'clock in the morning, when Mr. Augustus Minns knocked feebly at the street-door of his lodgings in Tavistock Street, cold, wet, cross, and miserable. He made his will next morning, and his professional man informs us, in that strict confidence in which we inform the public, that neither the name of Mr. Octavius Budden, nor of Mrs. Amelia Budden, nor of Master Alexander Augustus Budden, appears therein.

CHAPTER III.

SENTIMENT.

THE Miss Crumptions, or to quote the authority of the inscription on the garden-gate of Minerva House, Hammersmith, “The Misses Crumpton,” were two unusually tall, particularly thin, and exceedingly skinny personages; very upright, and very yellow. Miss Amelia Crumpton owned to thirty-eight, and Miss Maria Crumpton admitted she was forty; an admission which was rendered perfectly unnecessary by the self-evident fact of her being at least fifty. They dressed in the most interesting manner — like twins; and looked as happy and comfortable as a couple of marigolds run to

seed. They were very precise, had the strictest possible ideas of propriety, wore false hair, and always smelt very strongly of lavender.

Minerva House, conducted under the auspices of the two sisters, was a "finishing establishment for young ladies, where some twenty girls of the ages of from thirteen to nineteen inclusive, acquired a smattering of everything, and a knowledge of nothing; instruction in French and Italian, dancing-lessons twice a week; and other necessities of life. The house was a white one, a little removed from the roadside, with close palings in front. The bedroom windows were always left partly open, to afford a bird's-eye view of numerous little bedsteads with very white dimity furniture, and thereby impress the passer-by with a due sense of the luxuries of the establishment; and there was a front parlor hung round with highly varnished maps which nobody ever looked at, and filled with books which no one ever read, appropriated exclusively to the reception of parents, who, whenever they called, could not fail to be struck with the very deep appearance of the place.

"Amelia, my dear," said Miss Maria Crumpton, entering the school-room one morning, with her false hair in papers: as she occasionally did, in order to impress the young ladies with a conviction of its reality. "Amelia, my dear, here is a most gratifying note I have just received. You needn't mind reading it aloud."

Miss Amelia, thus advised, proceeded to read the following note with an air of great triumph:—

"Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M. P., presents his compliments to Miss Crumpton, and will feel much obliged by Miss Crumpton's calling on him, if she con-

veniently can, to-morrow morning at one o'clock, as Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M. P., is anxious to see Miss Crumpton on the subject of placing Miss Brook Dingwall under her charge.

“Adelphi.

“Monday morning.”

“A Member of Parliament’s daughter!” ejaculated Amelia, in an ecstatic tone.

“A Member of Parliament’s daughter!” repeated Miss Maria, with a smile of delight, which, of course, elicited a concurrent titter of pleasure from all the young ladies.

“It’s exceedingly delightful!” said Miss Amelia; whereupon all the young ladies murmured their admiration again. Courtiers are but school-boys, and court-ladies school-girls.

So important an announcement at once superseded the business of the day. A holiday was declared, in commemoration of the great event; the Miss Crumptons retired to their private apartment to talk it over; the smaller girls discussed the probable manners and customs of the daughter of a Member of Parliament; and the young ladies verging on eighteen wondered whether she was engaged, whether she was pretty, whether she wore much bustle, and many other *whethers* of equal importance.

The two Miss Crumptons proceeded to the Adelphi at the appointed time next day, dressed, of course, in their best style, and looking as amiable as they possibly could — which, by the by, is not saying much for them. Having sent in their cards, through the medium of a red-hot looking footman in bright livery, they were ushered into the august presence of the profound Dingwall.

Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M. P., was **very** haughty, solemn, and portentous. He had, naturally, a somewhat spasmodic expression of countenance, which was not rendered the less remarkable by his wearing an extremely stiff cravat. He was wonderfully proud of the M. P. attached to his name, and never lost an opportunity of reminding people of his dignity. He had a great idea of his own abilities, which must have been a great comfort to him, as no one else had; and in diplomacy, on a small scale, in his own family arrangements, he considered himself unrivalled. He was a county magistrate, and discharged the duties of his station with all due justice and impartiality; frequently committing poachers, and occasionally committing himself. Miss Brook Dingwall was one of that numerous class of young ladies, who, like adverbs, may be known by their answering to a commonplace question, and doing nothing else.

On the present occasion, this talented individual was seated in a small library at a table covered with papers, doing nothing, but trying to look busy — playing at shop. Acts of Parliament, and letters directed to “Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M. P.,” were ostentatiously scattered over the table; at a little distance from which, Mrs. Brook Dingwall was seated at work. One of those public nuisances, a spoiled child, was playing about the room, dressed after the most approved fashion — in a blue tunic with a black belt a quarter of a yard wide, fastened with an immense buckle — looking like a robber in a melodrama, seen through a diminishing glass.

After a little pleasantry from the sweet child, who amused himself by running away with Miss Maria Crumpton’s chair as fast as it was placed for her, the

visitors were seated, and Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., opened the conversation.

He had sent for Miss Crumpton, he said, in consequence of the high character he had received of her establishment from his friend Sir Alfred Muggs.

Miss Crumpton murmured her acknowledgments to him (Muggs), and Cornelius proceeded.

"One of my principal reasons, Miss Crumpton, for parting with my daughter, is, that she has lately acquired some sentimental ideas, which it is most desirable to eradicate from her young mind." (Here the little innocent before noticed fell out of an arm-chair with an awful crash.)

"Naughty boy!" said his mamma, who appeared more surprised at his taking the liberty of falling down, than at anything else; "I'll ring the bell for James to take him away."

"Pray don't check him, my love," said the diplomatist, as soon as he could make himself heard amidst the unearthly howling consequent upon the threat and the tumble. "It all arises from his great flow of spirits." This last explanation was addressed to Miss Crumpton.

"Certainly, sir," replied the antique Maria: not exactly seeing, however, the connection between a flow of animal spirits and a fall from an arm-chair.

Silence was restored, and the M. P. resumed: "Now, I know nothing so likely to effect this object, Miss Crumpton, as her mixing constantly in the society of girls of her own age; and, as I know that in your establishment she will meet such as are not likely to contaminate her young mind, I propose to send her to you."

The youngest Miss Crumpton expressed the acknowledgments of the establishment generally. Maria was

rendered speechless by bodily pain. The dear little fellow, having recovered his animal spirits, was standing upon her most tender foot, by way of getting his face (which looked like a capital O in a red-lettered play-bill) on a level with the writing-table.

"Of course, Lavinia will be a parlor boarder," continued the enviable father; "and on one point I wish my directions to be strictly observed. The fact is, that some ridiculous love affair, with a person much her inferior in life, has been the cause of her present state of mind. Knowing that of course, under your care, she can have no opportunity of meeting this person, I do not object to — indeed, I should rather prefer — her mixing with such society as you see yourself."

This important statement was again interrupted by the high-spirited little creature, in the excess of his joyousness breaking a pane of glass, and nearly precipitating himself into an adjacent area. James was rung for; considerable confusion and screaming succeeded; two little blue legs were seen to kick violently in the air as the man left the room, and the child was gone.

"Mr. Brook Dingwall would like Miss Brook Dingwall to learn everything," said Mrs. Brook Dingwall, who hardly ever said anything at all.

"Certainly," said both the Miss Crumptions together.

"And as I trust the plan I have devised will be effectual in weaning my daughter from this absurd idea, Miss Crumpton," continued the legislator, "I hope you will have the goodness to comply, in all respects, with any request I may forward to you."

The promise was of course made, and after a lengthened discussion, conducted on behalf of the Dingwalls with the most becoming diplomatic gravity, and on that

of the Crumptions with profound respect, it was finally arranged that Miss Lavinia should be forwarded to Hammersmith on the next day but one, on which occasion the half-yearly ball given at the establishment was to take place. It might divert the dear girl's mind. This, by the way, was another bit of diplomacy.

Miss Lavinia was introduced to her future governess, and both the Miss Crumptions pronounced her "a most charming girl;" an opinion which, by a singular coincidence, they always entertained of any new pupil.

Courtesies were exchanged, acknowledgments expressed, condescension exhibited, and the interview terminated.

Preparations, to make use of theatrical phraseology, "on a scale of magnitude never before attempted," were incessantly made at Minerva House to give every effect to the forthcoming ball. The largest room in the house was pleasingly ornamented with blue calico roses, plaid tulips, and other equally natural-looking artificial flowers, the work of the young ladies themselves. The carpet was taken up, the folding-doors were taken down, the furniture was taken out, and rout-seats were taken in. The linen-draper of Hammersmith were astounded at the sudden demand for blue sarsenet ribbon, and long white gloves. Dozens of geraniums were purchased for bouquets, and a harp and two violins were bespoke from town, in addition to the grand piano already on the premises. The young ladies who were selected to show off on the occasion, and do credit to the establishment, practised incessantly, much to their own satisfaction, and greatly to the annoyance of the lame old gentleman over the way; and a constant correspondence was kept up, between the Misses Crumpton and the Hammersmith pastrycook.

The evening came ; and then there was such a **lacing** of stays, and a tying of sandals, and dressing of hair, as never can take place with a proper degree of bustle out of a boarding-school. The smaller girls managed to be in everybody's way, and were pushed about accordingly ; and the elder ones dressed, and tied, and flattered, and envied, one another, as earnestly and sincerely as if they had actually *come out*.

"How do I look, dear?" inquired Miss Emily Smithers, the belle of the house, of Miss Caroline Wilson, who was her bosom friend, because she was the ugliest girl in Hammersmith, or out of it.

"Oh! charming, dear. How do I?"

"Delightful! you never looked so handsome," returned the belle, adjusting her own dress, and not bestowing a glance on her poor companion.

"I hope young Hilton will come early," said another young lady to Miss somebody else, in a fever of expectation.

"I'm sure he'd be highly flattered if he knew it," returned the other, who was practising *l'été*.

"Oh! he's so handsome," said the first.

"Such a charming person!" added a second.

"Such a *distingué* air;" said a third.

"Oh, what *do* you think?" said another girl, running into the room; "Miss Crumpton says her cousin's coming."

"What! Theodosius Butler?" said everybody in raptures.

"Is *he* handsome?" inquired a novice.

"No, not particularly handsome," was the general reply; "but, oh, so clever!"

Mr. Theodosius Butler was one of those immortal

geniuses who are to be met with, in almost every circle. They have, usually, very deep monotonous voices. They always persuade themselves that they are wonderful persons, and that they ought to be very miserable, though they don't precisely know why. They are very conceited, and usually possess half an idea; but, with enthusiastic young ladies, and silly young gentlemen, they are very wonderful persons. The individual in question, Mr. Theodosius, had written a pamphlet containing some very weighty considerations on the expediency of doing something or other; and as every sentence contained a good many words of four syllables, his admirers took it for granted that he meant a good deal.

"Perhaps that's he," exclaimed several young ladies, as the first pull of the evening threatened destruction to the bell of the gate.

An awful pause ensued. Some boxes arrived and a young lady—Miss Brook Dingwall, in full ball costume, with an immense gold chain round her neck, and her dress looped up with a single rose; an ivory fan in her hand, and a most interesting expression of despair in her face.

The Miss Crumptions inquired after the family with the most excruciating anxiety, and Miss Brook Dingwall was formally introduced to her future companions. The Miss Crumptions conversed with the young ladies in the most mellifluous tones, in order that Miss Brook Dingwall might be properly impressed with their amiable treatment.

Another pull at the bell. Mr. Dadson the writing master, and his wife. The wife in green silk, with shoes and cap-trimmings to correspond; the writing-master in a white waistcoat, black knee-shorts, and ditto silk stock-

ings, displaying a leg large enough for two writing-masters. The young ladies whispered one another, and the writing-master and his wife flattered the Miss Crumptions, who were dressed in amber, with long sashes, like dolls.

Repeated pulls at the bell, and arrivals too numerous to particularize : papas and mammas, and aunts and uncles, the owners and guardians of the different pupils ; the singing-master, Signor Lobschini, in a black wig ; the piano-forte player and the violins ; the harp, in a state of intoxication ; and some twenty young men, who stood near the door, and talked to one another, occasionally bursting into a giggle. A general hum of conversation. Coffee handed round, and plentifully partaken of by fat mammas, who looked like the stout people who come on in pantomimes for the sole purpose of being knocked down.

The popular Mr. Hilton was the next arrival ; and he having, at the request of the Miss Crumptions, undertaken the office of Master of the Ceremonies, the quadrilles commenced with considerable spirit. The young men by the door gradually advanced into the middle of the room, and in time became sufficiently at ease to consent to be introduced to partners. The writing-master danced every set, springing about with the most fearful agility, and his wife played a rubber in the back-parlor — a little room with five book-shelves, dignified by the name of the study. Setting her down to whist was a half-yearly piece of generalship on the part of the Miss Crumptions ; it was necessary to hide her somewhere, on account of her being a fright.

The interesting Lavinia Brook Dingwall was the only girl present, who appeared to take no interest in the pro



George & G. G. G. G.

ceedings of the evening. In vain was she solicited to dance ; in vain was the universal homage paid to her as the daughter of a member of parliament. She was equally unmoved by the splendid tenor of the inimitable Lobschini, and the brilliant execution of Miss Lætitia Parsons, whose performance of "The Recollections of Ireland" was universally declared to be almost equal to that of Moscheles himself. Not even the announcement of the arrival of Mr. Theodosius Butler could induce her to leave the corner of the back drawing-room in which she was seated.

"Now, Theodosius," said Miss Maria Crumpton, after that enlightened pamphleteer had nearly run the gauntlet of the whole company, "I must introduce you to our new pupil."

Theodosius looked as if he cared for nothing earthly.

"She's the daughter of a member of parliament," said Maria. — Theodosius started.

"And her name is — ?" he inquired.

"Miss Brook Dingwall."

"Great Heaven!" poetically exclaimed Theodosius, in a low tone.

Miss Crumpton commenced the introduction in due form. Miss Brook Dingwall languidly raised her head.

"Edward!" she exclaimed, with a half-shriek, on seeing the well-known nankeen legs.

Fortunately, as Miss Maria Crumpton possessed no remarkable share of penetration, and as it was one of the diplomatic arrangements that no attention was to be paid to Miss Lavinia's incoherent exclamations, she was perfectly unconscious of the mutual agitation of the parties ; and therefore, seeing that the offer of his hand for **the**

next quadrille, was accepted, she left him by the side of Miss Brook Dingwall.

"Oh, Edward!" exclaimed that most romantic of all romantic young ladies, as the light of science seated himself beside her, "Oh, Edward, is it you?"

Mr. Theodosius assured the dear creature, in the most impassioned manner, that he was not conscious of being anybody but himself.

"Then why — why — this disguise? Oh! Edward M'Neville Walter, what have I not suffered on your account?"

"Lavinia, hear me," replied the hero, in his most poetic strain. "Do not condemn me, unheard. If anything that emanates from the soul of such a wretch as I, can occupy a place in your recollection — if any being, so vile, deserve your notice — you may remember that I once published a pamphlet (and paid for its publication) entitled 'Considerations on the Policy of Removing the Duty on Beeswax.'"

"I do — I do!" sobbed Lavinia.

"That," continued the lover, "was a subject to which your father was devoted heart and soul."

"He was — he was!" reiterated the sentimentalist.

"I knew it," continued Theodosius, tragically; "I knew it — I forwarded him a copy. He wished to know me. Could I disclose my real name? Never! No, I assumed that name which you have so often pronounced in tones of endearment. As M'Neville Walter, I devoted myself to the stirring cause; as M'Neville Walter, I gained your heart; in the same character I was ejected from your house by your father's domestics; and in no character at all have I since been enabled to see you. We now meet again, and I proudly own that I am — Theodosius Butler."

The young lady appeared perfectly satisfied with this argumentative address, and bestowed a look of the most ardent affection on the immortal advocate of beeswax.

"May I hope," said he, "that the promise your father's violent behavior interrupted, may be renewed?"

"Let us join this set," replied Lavinia, coquettishly — for girls of nineteen *can* coquet.

"No," ejaculated he of the nankeens; "I stir not from this spot, writhing under this torture of suspense. May I — may I — hope?"

"You may."

"The promise is renewed?"

"It is."

"I have your permission?"

"You have."

"To the fullest extent?"

"You know it," returned the blushing Lavinia. The contortions of the interesting Butler's visage expressed his raptures.

We could dilate upon the occurrences that ensued. How Mr. Theodosius and Miss Lavinia danced, and talked, and sighed for the remainder of the evening — how the Miss Crumptions were delighted thereat. How the writing-master continued to frisk about with one-horse power, and how his wife, from some unaccountable freak, left the whist-table in the little back-parlor, and persisted in displaying her green head-dress in the most conspicuous part of the drawing-room. How the supper consisted of small triangular sandwiches in trays, and a tart here and there by way of variety; and how the visitors consumed warm water disguised with lemon, and dotted with nutmeg, under the denomination of negus. These, and other matters of as much interest, however, we pass

over, for the purpose of describing a scene of even **more** importance.

A fortnight after the date of the ball, Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M. P., was seated at the same library table, and in the same room, as we have before described. He was alone, and his face bore an expression of deep thought and solemn gravity — he was drawing up “A Bill for the better observance of Easter Monday.”

The footman tapped at the door — the legislator started from his reverie, and “Miss Crumpton” was announced. Permission was given for Miss Crumpton to enter the *sanctum*; Maria came sliding in, and having taken her seat with a due portion of affectation, the footman retired, and the governess was left alone with the M. P. Oh; how she longed for the presence of a third party! Even the facetious young gentleman would have been a relief.

Miss Crumpton began the duet. She hoped Mrs. Brook Dingwall and the handsome little boy were in good health.

They were. Mrs. Brook Dingwall and little Frederick were at Brighton.

“Much obliged to you, Miss Crumpton,” said Cornelius, in his most dignified manner, “for your attention in calling this morning. I should have driven down to Hammersmith, to see Lavinia, but your account was so very satisfactory, and my duties in the House occupy me so much, that I determined to postpone it for a week. How has she gone on?”

“Very well indeed, sir,” returned Maria, dreading to inform the father that she had gone off.

“Ah, I thought the plan on which I proceeded would be a match for her.”

Here was a favorable opportunity to say that some-

body else had been a match for her. But the unfortunate governess was unequal to the task.

"You have persevered strictly in the line of conduct I prescribed, Miss Crumpton?"

"Strictly, sir."

"You tell me in your note that her spirits gradually improved."

"Very much indeed, sir."

"To be sure. I was convinced they would."

"But I fear, sir," said Miss Crumpton, with visible emotion, "I fear the plan has not succeeded quite so well as we could have wished."

"No!" exclaimed the prophet. "Bless me! Miss Crumpton, you look alarmed. What has happened?"

"Miss Brook Dingwall, sir —"

"Yes, ma'am?"

"Has gone, sir" — said Maria, exhibiting a strong inclination to faint.

"Gone!"

"Eloped, sir."

"Eloped! — Who with — when — where — how?" almost shrieked the agitated diplomatist.

The natural yellow of the unfortunate Maria's face changed to all the hues of the rainbow, as she laid a small packet on the member's table.

He hurriedly opened it. A letter from his daughter, and another from Theodosius. He glanced over their contents — "Ere this reaches you, far distant — appeal to feelings — love to distraction — beeswax — slavery," &c., &c. He dashed his hand to his forehead, and paced the room with fearfully long strides, to the great alarm of the precise Maria.

"Now mind; from this time forward," said Mr. Brook

Dingwall, suddenly stopping at the table, and beating time upon it with his hand ; “from this time forward, I never will, under any circumstances whatever, permit a man who writes pamphlets to enter any other room of this house but the kitchen. — I’ll allow my daughter and her husband one hundred and fifty pounds a-year, and never see their faces again ; and, damme ! ma’am, I’ll bring in a bill for the abolition of finishing-schools !”

Some time has elapsed since this passionate declaration. Mr. and Mrs. Butler are at present rustivating in a small cottage at Ball’s Pond, pleasantly situated in the immediate vicinity of a brick-field. They have no family. Mr. Theodosius looks very important, and writes incessantly ; but, in consequence of a gross combination on the part of publishers, none of his productions appear in print. His young wife begins to think that ideal misery is preferable to real unhappiness ; and that a marriage, contracted in haste, and repented at leisure, is the cause of more substantial wretchedness than she ever anticipated.

On cool reflection, Cornelius Brook Dingwall, Esq., M. P., was reluctantly compelled to admit that the untoward result of his admirable arrangements was attributable, not to the Miss Crumptions, but his own diplomacy. He however consoles himself, like some other small diplomatists, by satisfactorily proving that if his plans did not succeed, they ought to have done so. Minerva House is in *statu quo*, and “The Misses Crumpton” remain in the peaceable and undisturbed enjoyment of all the advantages resulting from their Finishing-School.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TUGGS'S AT RAMSGATE.

ONCE upon a time, there dwelt, in a narrow street on the Surrey side of the water, within three minutes' walk of old London Bridge, Mr. Joseph Tuggs—a little dark-faced man, with shiny hair, twinkling eyes, short legs, and a body of very considerable thickness, measuring from the centre button of his waistcoat in front, to the ornamental buttons of his coat behind. The figure of the amiable Mrs. Tuggs, if not perfectly symmetrical, was decidedly comfortable; and the form of her only daughter, the accomplished Miss Charlotte Tuggs, was fast ripening into that state of luxuriant plumpness which had enchanted the eyes, and captivated the heart, of Mr. Joseph Tuggs in his earlier days. Mr. Simon Tuggs, his only son, and Miss Charlotte Tuggs's only brother, was as differently formed in body, as he was differently constituted in mind, from the remainder of his family. There was that elongation in his thoughtful face, and that tendency to weakness in his interesting legs, which tell so forcibly of a great mind and romantic disposition. The slightest traits of character in such a being possess no mean interest to speculative minds. He usually appeared in public, in capacious shoes with black cotton stockings; and was observed to be particularly attached to a black glazed stock, without tie or ornament of any description.

There is, perhaps, no profession, however useful; no

pursuit, however meritorious; which can escape the petty attacks of vulgar minds. Mr. Joseph Tuggs was a grocer. It might be supposed that a grocer was beyond the breath of calumny; but no—the neighbors stigmatized him as a chandler; and the poisonous voice of envy distinctly asserted that he dispensed tea and coffee by the quartern, retailed sugar by the ounce, cheese by the slice, tobacco by the screw, and butter by the pat. These taunts, however, were lost upon the Tuggs's. Mr. Tuggs attended to the grocery department; Mrs. Tuggs to the cheesemongery; and Miss Tuggs to her education. Mr. Simon Tuggs kept his father's books, and his own counsel.

One fine spring afternoon, the latter gentleman was seated on a tub of weekly Dorset, behind the little red desk with a wooden rail, which ornamented a corner of the counter; when a stranger dismounted from a cab, and hastily entered the shop. He was habited in black cloth, and bore with him a green umbrella, and a blue bag.

"Mr. Tuggs?" said the stranger, inquiringly.

"*My* name is Tuggs," replied Mr. Simon.

"It's the other Mr. Tuggs," said the stranger, looking towards the glass door which led into the parlor behind the shop, and on the inside of which, the round face of Mr. Tuggs, senior, was distinctly visible, peeping over the curtain.

Mr. Simon gracefully waved his pen, as if in intimation of his wish that his father would advance. Mr. Joseph Tuggs, with considerable celerity, removed his face from the curtain, and placed it before the stranger.

"I come from the Temple," said the man with the bag.

"From the Temple!" said Mrs. Tuggs, flinging open the door of the little parlor and disclosing Miss Tuggs in perspective.

"From the Temple!" said Miss Tuggs and Mr. Simon Tuggs at the same moment.

"From the Temple!" said Mr. Joseph Tuggs, turning as pale as a Dutch cheese.

"From the Temple," repeated the man with the bag; "from Mr. Cower's, the solicitor's. Mr. Tuggs, I congratulate you, sir. Ladies, I wish you joy of your prosperity! We have been successful." And the man with the bag leisurely divested himself of his umbrella and glove, as a preliminary to shaking hands with Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

Now the words "we have been successful" had no sooner issued from the mouth of the man with the bag, than Mr. Simon Tuggs rose from the tub of weekly Dorset, opened his eyes very wide, gasped for breath, made figures of eight in the air with his pen, and finally fell into the arms of his anxious mother, and fainted away, without the slightest ostensible cause or pretence.

"Water!" screamed Mrs. Tuggs.

"Look up, my son," exclaimed Mr. Tuggs.

"Simon! dear Simon!" shrieked Miss Tuggs.

"I'm better now," said Mr. Simon Tuggs. "What! successful!" And then, as corroborative evidence of his being better, he fainted away again, and was borne into the little parlor by the united efforts of the remainder of the family, and the man with the bag.

To a casual spectator, or to any one unacquainted with the position of the family, this fainting would have been unaccountable. To those who understood the mission of the man with the bag, and were moreover acquainted

with the excitability of the nerves of Mr. Simon Tuggs, it was quite comprehensible. A long-pending lawsuit respecting the validity of a will, had been unexpectedly decided; and Mr. Joseph Tuggs was the possessor of twenty thousand pounds.

A prolonged consultation took place that night, in the little parlor — a consultation that was to settle the future destinies of the Tuggs's. The shop was shut up at an unusually early hour; and many were the unavailing kicks bestowed upon the closed door by applicants for quarterns of sugar, or half-quarterns of bread, or penn'orths of pepper, which were to have been "left till Saturday," but which fortune had decreed were to be left alone altogether.

"We must certainly give up business," said Miss Tuggs.

"Oh, decidedly," said Mrs. Tuggs.

"Simon shall go to the bar," said Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

"And I shall always sign myself 'Cymon' in future," said his son.

"And I shall call myself Charlotta," said Miss Tuggs.

"And you must always call *me* 'Ma,' and father 'Pa,'" said Mrs. Tuggs.

"Yes, and Pa must leave off all his vulgar habits," interposed Miss Tuggs.

"I'll take care of all that," responded Mr. Joseph Tuggs, complacently. He was, at that very moment, eating pickled salmon with a pocket-knife.

"We must leave town immediately," said Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

Everybody concurred that this was an indispensable preliminary to being genteel. The question then arose. Where should they go?

"Gravesend?" mildly suggested Mr. Joseph Tuggs. The idea was unanimously scouted. Gravesend was *low*.

"Margate?" insinuated Mrs. Tuggs. Worse and worse — nobody there, but tradespeople.

"Brighton?" Mr. Cymon Tuggs opposed an insurmountable objection. All the coaches had been upset, in turn, within the last three weeks; each coach had averaged two passengers killed, and six wounded; and, in every case, the newspapers had distinctly understood that "no blame whatever was attributable to the coachman."

"Ramsgate?" ejaculated Mr. Cymon, thoughtfully. To be sure: how stupid they must have been, not to have thought of that before! Ramsgate was just the place of all others.

Two months after this conversation, the City of London Ramsgate steamer was running gayly down the river. Her flag was flying, her band was playing, her passengers were conversing; everything about her seemed gay and lively. — No wonder — the Tuggs's were on board.

"Charming, a'n't it?" said Mr. Joseph Tuggs, in a bottle-green great-coat, with a velvet collar of the same, and a blue travelling-cap with a gold band.

"Soul-inspiring," replied Mr. Cymon Tuggs — he was entered at the bar. "Soul-inspiring!"

"Delightful morning, sir!" said a stoutish, military-looking gentleman in a blue surtout buttoned up to his chin, and white trousers chained down to the soles of his boots.

Mr. Cymon Tuggs took upon himself the responsibility of answering the observation. "Heavenly!" he replied.

"You are an enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of Nature, sir?" said the military gentleman.

"I am, sir," replied Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

"Travelled much, sir?" inquired the military gentleman.

"Not much," replied Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

"You've been on the continent, of course?" inquired the military gentleman.

"Not exactly," replied Mr. Cymon Tuggs — in a qualified tone, as if he wished it to be implied that he had gone half-way and come back again.

"You of course intend your son to make the grand tour, sir?" said the military gentleman, addressing Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

As Mr. Joseph Tuggs did not precisely understand what the grand tour was, or how such an article was manufactured, he replied, "Of course." Just as he said the word, there came tripping up, from her seat at the stern of the vessel, a young lady in a puce-colored silk cloak, and boots of the same; with long black ringlets, large black eyes, brief petticoats, and unexceptionable ankles.

"Walter, my dear," said the young lady to the military gentleman.

"Yes, Belinda, my love," responded the military gentleman to the black-eyed young lady.

"What have you left me alone so long for?" said the young lady. "I have been stared out of countenance by those rude young men."

"What! stared at?" exclaimed the military gentleman, with an emphasis which made Mr. Cymon Tuggs withdraw his eyes from the young lady's face with inconceivable rapidity. "Which young men — where?" and

the military gentleman clenched his fist, and glared fearfully on the cigar-smokers around.

"Be calm, Walter, I entreat," said the young lady.

"I won't," said the military gentleman.

"Do, sir," interposed Mr. Cymon Tuggs. "They a'n't worth your notice."

"No — no — they are not, indeed," urged the young lady.

"I *will* be calm," said the military gentleman. "You speak truly, sir. I thank you for a timely remonstrance, which may have spared me the guilt of manslaughter." Calming his wrath, the military gentleman wrung Mr. Cymon Tuggs by the hand.

"My sister, sir!" said Mr. Cymon Tuggs; seeing that the military gentleman was casting an admiring look towards Miss Charlotta.

"My wife, ma'am — Mrs. Captain Waters," said the military gentleman, presenting the black-eyed young lady.

"My mother, ma'am — Mrs. Tuggs," said Mr. Cymon. The military gentleman and his wife murmured enchanting courtesies; and the Tuggs's looked as unembarrassed as they could.

"Walter, my dear," said the black-eyed young lady, after they had sat chatting with the Tuggs's some half hour.

"Yes, my love," said the military gentleman.

"Don't you think this gentleman (with an inclination of the head towards Mr. Cymon Tuggs) is very much like the Marquis Carriwini?"

"Lord bless me, very!" said the military gentleman.

"It struck me, the moment I saw him," said the young lady, gazing intently, and with a melancholy air, on the

scarlet countenance of Mr. Cymon Tuggs. Mr. Cymon Tuggs looked at everybody; and finding that everybody was looking at him, appeared to feel some temporary difficulty in disposing of his eyesight.

"So exactly the air of the marquis," said the military gentleman.

"Quite extraordinary!" sighed the military gentleman's lady.

"You don't know the marquis, sir?" inquired the military gentleman.

Mr. Cymon Tuggs stammered a negative.

"If you did," continued Captain Walter Waters, "you would feel how much reason you have to be proud of the resemblance — a most elegant man, with a most prepossessing appearance."

"He is — he is indeed!" exclaimed Belinda Waters energetically. As her eye caught that of Mr. Cymon Tuggs, she withdrew it from his features in bashful confusion.

All this was highly gratifying to the feelings of the Tuggs's; and when, in the course of farther conversation, it was discovered that Miss Charlotta Tuggs was the *fac-simile* of a titled relative of Mrs. Belinda Waters, and that Mrs. Tuggs herself was the very picture of the Dowager Duchess of Dobbleton, their delight in the acquisition of so genteel and friendly an acquaintance knew no bounds. Even the dignity of Captain Walter Waters relaxed, to that degree, that he suffered himself to be prevailed upon by Mr. Joseph Tuggs to partake of cold pigeon-pie and sherry, on deck; and a most delightful conversation, aided by these agreeable stimulants, was prolonged, until they ran alongside Ramsgate Pier.

“Good by’e, dear!” said Mrs. Captain Waters to Miss Charlotta Tuggs, just before the bustle of landing commenced; we shall see you on the sands in the morning; and, as we are sure to have found lodgings before then, I hope we shall be inseparables for many weeks to come.”

“Oh! I hope so,” said Miss Charlotta Tuggs, emphatically.

“Tickets, ladies and gen’lm’n,” said the man on the paddle-box.

“Want a porter, sir?” inquired a dozen men in smock-frocks.

“Now, my dear!” said Captain Waters.

“Good by’e!” said Mrs. Captain Waters — “good by’e, Mr. Cymon!” and with a pressure of the hand which threw the amiable young man’s nerves into a state of considerable derangement, Mrs. Captain Waters disappeared among the crowd. A pair of puce-colored boots were seen ascending the steps, a white handkerchief fluttered, a black eye gleamed. The Waters’s were gone, and Mr. Cymon Tuggs was alone in a heartless world.

Silently and abstractedly did that too sensitive youth follow his revered parents, and a train of smock-frocks and wheel-barrows, along the pier, until the bustle of the scene around, recalled him to himself. The sun was shining brightly; the sea, dancing to its own music, rolled merrily in; crowds of people promenaded to and fro; young ladies tittered; old ladies talked; nurse-maids displayed their charms to the greatest possible advantage; and their little charges ran up and down, and to and fro, and in and out, under the feet, and between the legs, of the assembled concourse, in the most

playful and exhilarating manner. There were old gentlemen, trying to make out objects through long telescopes ; and young ones, making objects of themselves in open shirt-collars ; ladies, carrying about portable chairs, and portable chairs carrying about invalids ; parties, waiting on the pier for parties who had come by the steamboat ; and nothing was to be heard but talking, laughing, welcoming, and merriment.

"Fly, sir?" exclaimed a chorus of fourteen men and six boys, the moment Mr. Joseph Tuggs, at the head of his little party, set foot in the street.

"Here's the gen'lm'n at last!" said one, touching his hat with mock politeness. "Werry glad to see you, sir, — been a-waitin' for you these six weeks. Jump in, if you please, sir!"

"Nice light fly and a fast trotter, sir," said another : "fourteen mile a hour, and surroundin' objects rendered invisibile by ex-treme welocity!"

"Large fly for your luggage, sir," cried a third. "Werry large fly here, sir — reg'lar bluebottle!"

"Here's *your* fly, sir!" shouted another aspiring charioteer, mounting the box, and inducing an o'd gray horse to indulge in some perfect reminiscences of a canter. "Look at him, sir! — temper of a lamb and haction of a steam-ingein!"

Resisting even the temptation of securing the services of so valuable a quadruped as the last-named, Mr. Joseph Tuggs beckoned to the proprietor of a dingy conveyance of a greenish hue, lined with faded striped calico ; and, the luggage and the family having been deposited therein, the animal in the shafts, after describing circles in the road for a quarter of an hour, at last consented to depart in quest of lodgings.

"How many beds have you got?" screamed Mrs. Tuggs out of the fly, to the woman who opened the door of the first house which displayed a bill intimating that apartments were to be let within.

"How many did you want, ma'am?" was, of course, the reply.

"Three."

"Will you step in, ma'am?" Down got Mrs. Tuggs. The family were delighted. Splendid view of the sea from the front windows — charming! A short pause. Back came Mrs. Tuggs again. — One parlor and a mattress.

"Why the devil didn't they say so at first?" inquired Mr. Joseph Tuggs, rather pettishly.

"Don't know," said Mrs. Tuggs.

"Wretches!" exclaimed the nervous Cymon. Another bill — another stoppage. Same question — same answer — similar result.

"What do they mean by this?" inquired Mr. Joseph Tuggs, thoroughly out of temper.

"Don't know," said the placid Mrs. Tuggs.

"Orvis the vay here, sir," said the driver, by way of accounting for the circumstance in a satisfactory manner; and off they went again, to make fresh inquiries, and encounter fresh disappointments.

It had grown dusk when the "fly" — the rate of whose progress greatly belied its name — after climbing up four or five perpendicular hills, stopped before the door of a dusty house, with a bay-window, from which you could obtain a beautiful glimpse of the sea — if you thrust half your body out of it, at the imminent peril of falling into the area. Mrs. Tuggs alighted. One ground-floor sitting-room, and three cells with beds in them up-

stairs. A double house. Family on the opposite side. Five children milk-and-watering in the parlor, and one little boy, expelled for bad behavior, screaming on his back in the passage.

"What's the terms?" said Mrs. Tuggs. The mistress of the house was considering the expediency of putting on an extra guinea; so, she coughed slightly, and affected not to hear the question.

"What's the terms?" said Mrs. Tuggs, in a louder key.

"Five guineas a week, ma'am, *with* attendance," replied the lodging-house keeper. (Attendance means the privilege of ringing the bell as often as you like, for your own amusement.)

"Rather dear," said Mrs. Tuggs.

"Oh dear, no, ma'am!" replied the mistress of the house, with a benign smile of pity at the ignorance of manners and customs, which the observation betrayed. "Very cheap!"

Such an authority was indisputable. Mrs. Tuggs paid a week's rent in advance, and took the lodgings for a month. In an hour's time, the family were seated at tea in their new abode.

"Capital srimps!" said Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

Mr. Cymon eyed his father with a rebellious scowl, as he emphatically said "*Shrimps*."

"Well then, *shrimps*," said Mr. Joseph Tuggs. "*Srimps* or *shrimps*, don't much matter."

There was pity, blended with malignity, in Mr. Cymon's eye, as he replied, "Don't matter, father! What would Captain Waters say, if he heard such vulgarity?"

"Or what would dear Mrs. Captain Waters say," added

Charlotta, "if she saw mother — ma, I mean — eating them whole, heads and all!"

"It won't bear thinking of!" ejaculated Mr. Cymon, with a shudder. "How different," he thought, "from the Dowager Duchess of Dobbleton!"

"Very pretty woman, Mrs. Captain Waters, is she not, Cymon?" inquired Miss Charlotta.

A glow of nervous excitement passed over the countenance of Mr. Cymon Tuggs, as he replied, "An angel of beauty!"

"Hallo!" said Mr. Joseph Tuggs, "Hallo, Cymon, my boy, take care. Married lady you know;" and he winked one of his twinkling eyes knowingly.

"Why," exclaimed Cymon, starting up with an ebullition of fury, as unexpected as alarming, "Why am I to be reminded of that blight of my happiness, and ruin of my hopes? Why am I to be taunted with the miseries which are heaped upon my head? Is it not enough to — to — to," and the orator paused; but whether for want of words, or lack of breath, was never distinctly ascertained.

There was an impressive solemnity in the tone of this address, and in the air with which the romantic Cymon, at its conclusion, rang the bell, and demanded a flat candlestick, which effectually forbade a reply. He stalked dramatically to bed, and the Tuggs's went to bed too, half an hour afterwards, in a state of considerable mystification and perplexity.

If the pier had presented a scene of life and bustle to the Tuggs's on their first landing at Ramsgate, it was far surpassed by the appearance of the sands on the morning after their arrival. It was a fine, bright, clear day, with a light breeze from the sea. There were the same ladies

and gentlemen, the same children, the same nursemaids, the same telescopes, the same portable chairs. The ladies were employed in needlework, or watchguard making, or knitting, or reading novels; the gentlemen were reading newspapers and magazines; the children were digging holes in the sand with wooden spades, and collecting water therein; the nursemaids, with their youngest charges in their arms, were running in after the waves, and then running back with the waves after them; and, now and then, a little sailing-boat either departed with a gay and talkative cargo of passengers, or returned with a very silent, and particularly uncomfortable-looking one.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Mrs. Tuggs, as she and Mr. Joseph Tuggs, and Miss Charlotta Tuggs, and Mr. Cymon Tuggs, with their eight feet in a corresponding number of yellow shoes, seated themselves on four rush-bottomed chairs, which, being placed in a soft part of the sand, forthwith sunk down some two feet and a half. — "Well, I never!"

Mr. Cymon, by an exertion of great personal strength, uprooted the chairs, and removed them further back.

"Why, I'm bless'd if there a'n't some ladies agoing in!" exclaimed Mr. Joseph Tuggs, with intense astonishment.

"Lor, pa!" exclaimed Miss Charlotta.

"There *is*, my dear," said Mr. Joseph Tuggs. And sure enough, four young ladies, each furnished with a towel, tripped up the steps of a bathing-machine. In went the horse, floundering about in the water; round turned the machine; down sat the driver; and presently out burst the young ladies aforesaid, with four distinct splashes.

"Well, that's sing'ler, too!" ejaculated Mr. Joseph Tuggs, after an awkward pause. Mr. Cymon coughed slightly.

"Why, here's some gentlemen agoing in on this side," exclaimed Mrs. Tuggs, in a tone of horror.

Three machines — three horses — three flounderings — three turnings round — three splashes — three gentlemen, disporting themselves in the water like so many dolphins.

"Well, *that's* sing'ler!" said Mr. Joseph Tuggs again. Miss Charlotta coughed this time, and another pause ensued. It was agreeably broken.

"How d'ye do, dear? We have been looking for you, all the morning," said a voice to Miss Charlotta Tuggs. Mrs. Captain Waters was the owner of it.

"How d' ye do?" said Captain Walter Waters, all suavity; and a most cordial interchange of greetings ensued.

"Belinda, my love," said Captain Walter Waters, applying his glass to his eye, and looking in the direction of the sea.

"Yes, my dear," replied Mrs. Captain Waters.

"There's Harry Thompson!"

"Where?" said Belinda, applying her glass to her eye.

"Bathing."

"Lor, so it is! He don't see us, does he?"

"No, I don't think he does," replied the captain. Bless my soul, how very singular!"

"What?" inquired Belinda.

"There's Mary Golding, too."

"Lor! — where?" (Up went the glass again.)

"There!" said the captain, pointing to one of the

young ladies before noticed, who, in her bathing costume, looked as if she was enveloped in a patent Mackintosh, of scanty dimensions.

"So it is, I declare!" exclaimed Mrs. Captain Waters. "How very curious we should see them both!"

"Very," said the captain, with perfect coolness.

"It's the reg'lar thing here, you see," whispered Mr. Cymon Tuggs to his father.

"I see it is," whispered Mr. Joseph Tuggs in reply. "Queer though — a'n't it?" Mr. Cymon Tuggs nodded assent.

"What do you think of doing with yourself this morning?" inquired the captain. "Shall we lunch at Pegwell?"

"I should like that very much indeed," interposed Mrs. Tuggs. She had never heard of Pegwell; but the word "lunch" had reached her ears, and it sounded very agreeably.

"How shall we go?" inquired the captain; "it's too warm to walk."

"A shay?" suggested Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

"Chaise," whispered Mr. Cymon.

"I should think one would be enough," said Mr. Joseph Tuggs aloud, quite unconscious of the meaning of the correction. "However, two shays if you like."

"I should like a donkey *so* much," said Belinda.

"Oh, so should I!" echoed Charlotta Tuggs.

"Well, we can have a fly," suggested the captain, 'and you can have a couple of donkeys."

A fresh difficulty arose. Mrs. Captain Waters declared it would be decidedly improper for two ladies to ride alone. The remedy was obvious. Perhaps young Mr. Tuggs would be gallant enough to accompany them.

Mr. Cymon Tuggs blushed, smiled, looked vacant, and faintly protested that he was no horseman. The objection was at once overruled. A fly was speedily found; and three donkeys — which the proprietor declared on his solemn asseveration to be “three parts blood, and the other corn” — were engaged in the service.

“Kim up!” shouted one of the two boys who followed behind, to propel the donkeys, when Belinda Waters and Charlotta Tuggs had been hoisted, and pushed, and pulled, into their respective saddles.

“Hi — hi — hi!” groaned the other boy behind Mr. Cymon Tuggs. Away went the donkey, with the stirrups jingling against the heels of Cymon’s boots, and Cymon’s boots nearly scraping the ground.

“Way — way! Wo—o—o—o—!” cried Mr. Cymon Tuggs as well as he could, in the midst of the jolting.

“Don’t make it gallop!” screamed Mrs. Captain Waters, behind.

“My donkey *will* go into the public-house!” shrieked Miss Tuggs in the rear.

“Hi — hi — hi!” groaned both the boys together and on went the donkeys as if nothing would ever stop them.

Everything has an end, however; even the galloping of donkeys will cease in time. The animal which Mr. Cymon Tuggs bestrode, feeling sundry uncomfortable tugs at the bit, the intent of which he could by no means divine, abruptly sidled against a brick wall, and expressed his uneasiness by grinding Mr. Cymon Tuggs’s leg on the rough surface. Mrs. Captain Waters’s donkey, apparently under the influence of some playfulness of spirit, rushed suddenly, head first, into a hedge, and declined to come out again: and the quadruped on which Miss

Tuggs was mounted, expressed his delight at this humorous proceeding by firmly planting his fore-feet against the ground, and kicking up his hind-legs in a very agile, but somewhat alarming manner.

This abrupt termination to the rapidity of the ride, naturally occasioned some confusion. Both the ladies indulged in vehement screaming for several minutes; and Mr. Cymon Tuggs, besides sustaining intense bodily pain, had the additional mental anguish of witnessing their distressing situation, without having the power to rescue them, by reason of his leg being firmly screwed in between the animal and the wall. The efforts of the boys, however, assisted by the ingenious expedient of twisting the tail of the most rebellious donkey, restored order in a much shorter time than could have reasonably been expected, and the little party jogged slowly on together.

"Now let 'em walk," said Mr. Cymon Tuggs. "It's cruel to overdrive 'em."

"Werry well, sir," replied the boy, with a grin at his companion, as if he understood Mr. Cymon to mean that the cruelty applied less to the animals than to their riders.

"What a lovely day, dear!" said Charlotta.

"Charming; enchanting, dear!" responded Mrs. Captain Waters. "What a beautiful prospect, Mr. Tuggs!"

Cymon looked full in Belinda's face, as he responded — "Beautiful, indeed!" The lady cast down her eyes, and suffered the animal she was riding to fall a little back. Cymon Tuggs instinctively did the same.

There was a brief silence, broken only by a sigh from Mr. Cymon Tuggs.

"Mr. Cymon," said the lady suddenly, in a low tone, "Mr. Cymon — I am another's."

Mr. Cymon expressed his perfect concurrence in a statement which it was impossible to controvert.

"If I had not been —" resumed Belinda; and there she stopped.

"What — what?" said Mr. Cymon, earnestly. "Do not torture me. What would you say?"

"If I had not been" — continued Mrs. Captain Waters — "if, in earlier life, it had been my fate to have known, and been beloved by, a noble youth — a kindred soul — a congenial spirit — one capable of feeling and appreciating the sentiments which —"

"Heavens! what do I hear?" exclaimed Mr. Cymon Tuggs. "Is it possible! can I believe my — Come up!" (This last unsentimental parenthesis was addressed to the donkey, who with his head between his fore-legs, appeared to be examining the state of his shoes with great anxiety.)

"Hi — hi — hi," said the boys behind. "Come up," expostulated Cymon Tuggs again. "Hi — hi — hi!" repeated the boys again. And whether it was that the animal felt indignant at the tone of Mr. Tuggs's command, or felt alarmed by the noise of the deputy proprietor's boots running behind him; or whether he burned with a noble emulation to outstrip the other donkeys; certain it is that he no sooner heard the second series of 'hi — hi's,' than he started away, with a celerity of pace which jerked Mr. Cymon's hat off, instantaneously, and carried him to the Pegwell Bay hotel in no time, where he deposited his rider without giving him the trouble of dismounting, by sagaciously pitching him over his head into the very doorway of the tavern.

Great was the confusion of Mr. Cymon Tuggs, when he was put right end uppermost by two waiters ; considerable was the alarm of Mrs. Tuggs in behalf of her son ; agonizing were the apprehensions of Mrs. Captain Waters on his account. It was speedily discovered, however, that he had not sustained much more injury than the donkey — he was grazed, and the animal was grazing — and then it *was* a delightful party to be sure ! Mr. and Mrs. Tuggs, and the captain, had ordered lunch in the little garden behind : — small saucers of large shrimps, dabs of butter, crusty loaves, and bottled ale. The sky was without a cloud ; there were flower-pots and turf before them ; the sea, from the foot of the cliff, stretching away as far as the eye could discern anything at all ; vessels in the distance, with sails as white and as small as nicely got-up cambric handkerchiefs. The shrimps were delightful, the ale better, and the captain even more pleasant than either. Mrs. Captain Waters was in *such* spirits after lunch ! — chasing, first the captain across the turf, and among the flower-pots ; and then Mr. Cymon Tuggs ; and then Miss Tuggs ; and laughing, too, quite boisterously. But as the captain said, it didn't matter ; who knew what they were, there ? For all the people of the house knew, they might be common people. To which Mr. Joseph Tuggs responded, "To be sure." And then they went down the steep wooden steps a little further on, which led to the bottom of the cliff ; and looked at the crabs, and the seaweed, and the eels, till it was more than fully time to go back to Ramsgate again. Finally, Mr. Cymon Tuggs ascended the steps last, and Mrs. Captain Waters last but one, and Mr. Cymon Tuggs discovered that the foot

and ankle of Mrs. Captain Waters were even more unexceptionable than he had at first supposed.

Taking a donkey towards his ordinary place of residence, is a very different thing, and a feat much more easily to be accomplished, than taking him from it. It requires a great deal of foresight and presence of mind in the one case, to anticipate the numerous flights of his discursive imagination ; whereas, in the other, all you have to do, is, to hold on, and place a blind confidence in the animal. Mr. Cymon Tuggs adopted the latter expedient on his return ; and his nerves were so little discomposed by the journey, that he distinctly understood they were all to meet again at the library in the evening.

The library was crowded. There were the same ladies, and the same gentlemen, who had been on the sands in the morning, and on the pier the day before. There were young ladies, in maroon-colored gowns and black velvet bracelets, dispensing fancy articles in the shop, and presiding over games of chance in the concert-room. There were marriageable daughters, and marriage-making mammas, gaming and promenading, and turning over music, and flirting. There were some male beaux doing the sentimental in whispers, and others doing the ferocious in moustache. There were Mrs. Tuggs in amber, Miss Tuggs in sky-blue, Mrs. Captain Waters in pink. There was Captain Waters in a braided surtout ; there was Mr. Cymon Tuggs in pumps and a gilt waistcoat ; there was Mr. Joseph Tuggs in a blue coat, and a shirt-frill.

"Numbers three, eight, and eleven!" cried one of the young ladies in the maroon-colored gowns.

"Numbers three, eight, and eleven!" echoed another young lady in the same uniform.

"Number three's gone," said the first young lady. "Numbers eight and eleven!"

"Numbers eight and eleven!" echoed the second young lady.

"Number eight's gone, Mary Ann," said the first young lady.

"Number eleven!" screamed the second.

"The numbers are all taken now, ladies, if you please," said the first. The representatives of numbers three, eight, and eleven, and the rest of the numbers, crowded round the table.

"Will you throw, ma'am?" said the presiding goddess, handing the dice-box to the eldest daughter of a stout lady, with four girls.

There was a profound silence among the lookers-on.

"Throw, Jane, my dear," said the stout lady. An interesting display of bashfulness — a little blushing in a cambric handkerchief — a whispering to a younger sister.

"Amelia, my dear, throw for your sister," said the stout lady; and then she turned to a walking advertisement of Rowland's Macassar Oil, who stood next her, and said, "Jane is so *very* modest and retiring; but I can't be angry with her for it. An artless and unsophisticated girl is so truly amiable, that I often wish Amelia was more like her sister!"

The gentleman with the whiskers whispered his admiring approval.

"Now, my dear!" said the stout lady. Miss Amelia threw — eight for her sister, ten for herself.

"Nice figure, Amelia," whispered the stout lady, to a thin youth beside her.

"Beautiful!"

"And *such* a spirit! I am like you in that respect. I

can *not* help admiring that life and vivacity. Ah! (a sigh) I wish I could make poor Jane a little more like my dear Amelia!

The young gentleman cordially acquiesced in the sentiment; both he, and the individual first addressed, were perfectly contented.

"Who's this?" inquired Mr. Cymon Tuggs of Mrs. Captain Waters, as a short female, in a blue velvet hat and feathers, was led into the orchestra, by a fat man in black tights, and cloudy Berlins.

"Mrs. Tippin, of the London theatres," replied Belinda, referring to the programme of the concert.

The talented Tippin having condescendingly acknowledged the clapping of hands, and shouts of "bravo!" which greeted her appearance, proceeded to sing the popular cavatina of "Bid me discourse," accompanied on the piano by Mr. Tippin; after which, Mr. Tippin sang a comic song, accompanied on the piano by Mrs. Tippin: the applause consequent upon which was only to be exceeded by the enthusiastic approbation bestowed upon an air with variations on the guitar, by Miss Tippin, accompanied on the chin by Master Tippin.

Thus passed the evening; thus passed the days and evenings of the Tuggs's, and the Waters's, for six weeks. Sands in the morning — donkeys at noon — pier in the afternoon — library at night — and the same people everywhere.

On that very night six weeks, the moon was shining brightly over the calm sea, which dashed against the feet of the tall gaunt cliffs, with just enough noise to lull the old fish to sleep, without disturbing the young ones, when two figures were discernible — or would have been, if anybody had looked for them — seated on one of the

wooden benches which are stationed near the verge of the western cliff. The moon had climbed higher into the heavens, by two hours' journeying, since those figures first sat down — and yet they had moved not. The crowd of loungers had thinned and dispersed; the noise of itinerant musicians had died away; light after light had appeared in the windows of the different houses in the distance; blockade-man after blockade-man had passed the spot, wending his way towards his solitary post; and yet those figures had remained stationary. Some portions of the two forms were in deep shadow, but the light of the moon fell strongly on a puce-colored boot and a glazed stock. Mr. Cymon Tuggs, and Mrs. Captain Waters, were seated on that bench. They spoke not, but were silently gazing on the sea.

"Walter will return to-morrow," said Mrs. Captain Waters, mournfully breaking silence.

Mr. Cymon Tuggs sighed like a gust of wind through a forest of gooseberry bushes, as he replied, "Alas he will."

"Oh, Cymon!" resumed Belinda, "the chaste delight, the calm happiness, of this one week of Platonic love, is too much for me!"

Cymon was about to suggest that it was too little for him, but he stopped himself, and murmured unintelligibly.

"And to think that even this glimpse of happiness, innocent as it is," exclaimed Belinda, "is now to be lost for ever!"

"Oh, do not say for ever, Belinda," exclaimed the ex-
citable Cymon, as two strongly defined tears chased each other down his pale face — it was so long that there was plenty of room for a chase — "Do not say for ever!"

"I must," replied Belinda.

"Why?" urged Cymon, "oh why? Such Platonic acquaintance as ours is so harmless, that even your husband can never object to it."

"My husband!" exclaimed Belinda. "You little know him. Jealous and revengeful; ferocious in his revenge—a maniac in his jealousy! Would you be assassinated before my eyes?" Mr. Cymon Tuggs, in a voice broken by emotion, expressed his disinclination to undergo the process of assassination before the eyes of anybody.

"Then leave me," said Mrs. Captain Waters. "Leave me, this night, for ever. It is late; let us return."

Mr. Cymon Tuggs sadly offered the lady his arm, and escorted her to her lodgings. He paused at the door—he felt a Platonic pressure of his hand. "Good night," he said, hesitating.

"Good night," sobbed the lady. Mr. Cymon Tuggs paused again.

"Won't you walk in, sir?" said the servant. Mr. Tuggs hesitated. Oh, that hesitation! He *did* walk in.

"Good night!" said Mr. Cymon Tuggs again, when he reached the drawing-room.

"Good night!" replied Belinda; "and, if at any period of my life, I—Hush!" The lady paused and stared, with a steady gaze of horror, on the ashy countenance of Mr. Cymon Tuggs. There was a double knock at the street-door.

"It is my husband!" said Belinda, as the captain's voice was heard below.

"And my family!" added Cymon Tuggs, as the voices of his relatives floated up the staircase.

"The curtain! The curtain!" gasped Mrs. Captain Waters, pointing to the window, before which some chintz hangings were closely drawn.

"But I have done nothing wrong," said the hesitating Cymon.

"The curtain!" reiterated the frantic lady: "you will be murdered." This last appeal to his feelings was irresistible. The dismayed Cymon concealed himself behind the curtain, with pantomimic suddenness.

Enter the captain, Joseph Tuggs, Mrs. Tuggs, and Charlotta.

"My dear," said the captain, "Lieutenant Slaughter." Two iron-shod boots and one gruff voice were heard by Mr. Cymon to advance, and acknowledge the honor of the introduction. The sabre of the lieutenant rattled heavily upon the floor, as he seated himself at the table. Mr. Cymon's fears almost overcame his reason.

"The brandy, my dear!" said the captain. Here was a situation! They were going to make a night of it! And Mr. Cymon Tuggs was pent up behind the curtain and afraid to breathe!

"Slaughter," said the captain, "a cigar?"

Now, Mr. Cymon Tuggs never could smoke, without feeling it indispensably necessary to retire, immediately, and never could smell smoke without a strong disposition to cough. The cigars were introduced; the captain was a professed smoker; so was the lieutenant; so was Joseph Tuggs. The apartment was small, the door was closed, the smoke powerful; it hung in heavy wreaths over the room, and at length found its way behind the curtain. Cymon Tuggs held his nose, his mouth, his breath. It was all of no use — out came the cough.



"Bless my soul!" said the captain, "I beg your pardon, Miss Tuggs. You dislike smoking?"

"Oh, no; I don't indeed," said Charlotta.

"It makes you cough."

"Oh dear no."

"You coughed just now."

"Me, Captain Waters! Lor! how can you say so?"

"Somebody coughed," said the captain.

"I certainly thought so," said Slaughter. No; everybody denied it.

"Fancy," said the captain.

"Must be," echoed Slaughter.

Cigars resumed — more smoke — another cough — smothered, but violent.

"Damned odd!" said the captain, staring about him.

"Sing'ler!" ejaculated the unconscious Mr. Joseph Tuggs.

Lieutenant Slaughter looked first at one person mysteriously, then at another; then, laid down his cigar; then, approached the window on tiptoe, and pointed with his right thumb over his shoulder, in the direction of the curtain.

"Slaughter!" ejaculated the captain, rising from table, "what do you mean?"

The lieutenant, in reply, drew back the curtain and discovered Mr. Cymon Tuggs behind it; pallid with apprehension, and blue with wanting to cough.

"Aha!" exclaimed the captain furiously, "What do I see? Slaughter, your sabre!"

"Cymon!" screamed the Tuggs's.

"Mercy!" said Belinda.

"Platonic!" gasped Cymon.

"Your sabre!" roared the captain "Slaughter —
anhand me — the villain's life!"

"Murder!" screamed the Tuggs's.

"Hold him fast, sir!" faintly articulated Cymon.

"Water!" exclaimed Joseph Tuggs — and Mr. Cymon Tuggs and all the ladies forthwith fainted away, and formed a tableau.

Most willingly would we conceal the disastrous termination of the six weeks' acquaintance. A troublesome form, and an arbitrary custom, however, prescribe that a story should have a conclusion, in addition to a commencement; we have therefore no alternative. Lieutenant Slaughter brought a message — the captain brought an action. Mr. Joseph Tuggs interposed — the lieutenant negotiated. When Mr. Cymon Tuggs recovered from the nervous disorder into which misplaced affection, and exciting circumstances had plunged him, he found that his family had lost their pleasant acquaintance; that his father was minus fifteen hundred pounds; and the captain plus the precise sum. The money was paid to hush the matter up, but it got abroad notwithstanding; and there are not wanting some who affirm that three designing impostors never found more easy dupes, than did Captain Waters, Mrs. Waters, and Lieutenant Slaughter, in the Tuggs's at Ramsgate.

CHAPTER V.

HORATIO SPARKINS.

"INDEED, my love, he paid Teresa very great attention on the last assembly night," said Mrs. Malderton, addressing her spouse, who, after the fatigues of the day in the City, was sitting with a silk handkerchief over his head, and his feet on the fender, drinking his port; — "very great attention; and I say again, every possible encouragement ought to be given him. He positively must be asked down here to dine."

"Who must?" inquired Mr. Malderton.

"Why, you know whom I mean, my dear — the young man with the black whiskers and the white cravat, who has just come out at our assembly, and whom all the girls are talking about. Young —— dear me! what's his name? — Marianne, what *is* his name?" continued Mrs. Malderton, addressing her youngest daughter, who was engaged in netting a purse and looking sentimental.

"Mr. Horatio Sparkins, ma," replied Miss Marianne, with a sigh.

"Oh! yes, to be sure — Horatio Sparkins," said Mrs. Malderton. "Decidedly the most gentleman-like young man I ever saw. I am sure, in the beautifully made coat he wore the other night, he looked like — like —"

"Like Prince Leopold, ma — so noble, so full of sentiment!" suggested Marianne, in a tone of enthusiastic admiration.

"You should recollect, my dear," resumed Mrs. Mal

der-ton, "that Teresa is now eight-and-twenty; and that it really is very important that something should be done."

Miss Teresa Malderton was a very little girl, rather fat, with vermilion cheeks, but good-humored, and still disengaged, although, to do her justice, the misfortune arose from no lack of perseverance on her part. In vain, had she flirted for ten years; in vain, had Mr. and Mrs. Malderton assiduously kept up an extensive acquaintance among the young eligible bachelors of Camberwell, and even of Wandsworth and Brixton; to say nothing of those who "dropped in" from town. Miss Malderton was as well known as the lion on the top of Northumberland House, and had an equal chance of "going off."

"I am quite sure you'd like him," continued Mrs. Malderton; "he is so gentlemanly!"

"So clever!" said Miss Marianne.

"And has such a flow of language!" added Miss Teresa.

"He has a great respect for you, my dear," said Mrs. Malderton to her husband. Mr. Malderton coughed, and looked at the fire.

"Yes, I'm sure he's very much attached to pa's society," said Miss Marianne.

"No doubt of it," echoed Miss Teresa.

"Indeed, he said as much to me in confidence," observed Mrs. Malderton.

"Well, well," returned Mr. Malderton, somewhat flattered; "If I see him at the assembly to-morrow, perhaps I'll ask him down. I hope he knows we live at Oak Lodge, Camberwell, my dear?"

"Of course — and that you keep a one-horse carriage."

"I'll see about it," said Mr. Malderton, composing himself for a nap; "I'll see about it."

Mr. Malderton was a man whose whole scope of ideas was limited to Lloyd's, the Exchange, the India House, and the Bank. A few successful speculations had raised him from a situation of obscurity and comparative poverty to a state of affluence. As frequently happens in such cases, the ideas of himself and his family became elevated to an extraordinary pitch as their means increased; they affected fashion, taste, and many other fooleries, in imitation of their betters, and had a very decided and becoming horror of anything which could, by possibility, be considered *low*. He was hospitable from ostentation, illiberal from ignorance, and prejudiced from conceit. Egotism and the love of display induced him to keep an excellent table: convenience, and a love of good things of this life, insured him plenty of guests. He liked to have clever men, or what he considered such, at his table, because it was a great thing to talk about; but he never could endure what he called "sharp fellows." Probably, he cherished this feeling out of compliment to his two sons, who gave their respected parent no uneasiness in that particular. The family were ambitious of forming acquaintances and connections in some sphere of society superior to that in which they themselves moved; and one of the necessary consequences of this desire, added to their utter ignorance of the world beyond their own small circle, was, that any one who could lay claim to an acquaintance with people of rank and title, had a sure passport to the table at Oak Lodge, Camberwell.

The appearance of Mr. Horatio Sparkins at the assembly had excited no small degree of surprise and curiosity among its regular frequenters. Who could he be? He was evidently reserved, and apparently melan-

choly. Was he a clergyman? — He danced too well. A barrister? — He said he was not called. He used very fine words, and talked a great deal. Could he be a distinguished foreigner, come to England for the purpose of describing the country; its manners and customs; and frequenting public balls and public dinners, with the view of becoming acquainted with high life, polished etiquette and English refinement? — No, he had not a foreign accent. Was he a surgeon, a contributor to the magazines, a writer of fashionable novels, or an artist? — No; to each and all of these surmises, there existed some valid objection. — “Then,” said everybody, “he must be *somebody*.” — “I should think he must be,” reasoned Mr. Malderton, with himself, “because he perceives our superiority, and pays us so much attention.”

The night succeeding the conversation we have just recorded, was “assembly night.” The double-fly was ordered to be at the door of Oak Lodge at nine o'clock precisely. The Miss Maldertons were dressed in sky-blue satin trimmed with artificial flowers; and Mrs. M. (who was a little fat woman) in ditto ditto, looked like her eldest daughter multiplied by two. Mr. Frederick Malderton, the eldest son, in full-dress costume, was the very *beau idéal* of a smart waiter; and Mr. Thomas Malderton, the youngest, with his white dress-stock, blue coat, bright buttons, and red watch-ribbon, strongly resembled the portrait of that interesting, but rash young gentleman, George Barnwell. Every member of the party had made up his or her mind to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr. Horatio Sparkins. Miss Teresa, of course, was to be as amiable and interesting as ladies of eight-and-twenty on the look-out for a husband usually are. Mrs. Malderton would be all smiles and graces. Miss

Marianne would request the favor of some verses for her album. Mr. Malderton would patronize the great unknown by asking him to dinner. Tom intended to ascertain the extent of his information on the interesting topics of snuff and cigars. Even Mr. Frederick Malderton himself, the family authority on all points of taste, dress, and fashionable arrangement; who had lodgings of his own in town; who had a free admission to Covent Garden theatre; who always dressed according to the fashions of the months; who went up the water twice a-week in the season; and who actually had an intimate friend who once knew a gentleman who formerly lived in the Albany, — even he had determined that Mr. Horatio Sparkins must be a devilish good fellow, and that he would do him the honor of challenging him to a game at billiards.

The first object that met the anxious eyes of the expectant family on their entrance into the ball-room, was the interesting Horatio, with his hair brushed off his forehead, and his eyes fixed on the ceiling, reclining in a contemplative attitude on one of the seats.

"There he is, my dear," whispered Mrs. Malderton to Mr. Malderton.

"How like Lord Byron!" murmured Miss Teresa.

"Or Montgomery!" whispered Miss Marianne.

"Or the portraits of Captain Cook!" suggested Tom.

"Tom — don't be an ass!" said his father, who checked him on all occasions, probably with a view to prevent his becoming "sharp" — which was very unnecessary.

The elegant Sparkins attitudinized with admirable effect, until the family had crossed the room. He then started up, with the most natural appearance of surprise and delight; accosted Mrs. Malderton with the utmost

cordiality ; saluted the young ladies in the most enchanting manner ; bowed to, and shook hands with, Mr. Malderton, with a degree of respect amounting almost to veneration ; and returned the greetings of the two young men in a half-gratified, half-patronizing manner, which fully convinced them that he must be an important, and, at the same time, condescending personage.

“ Miss Malderton,” said Horatio, after the ordinary salutations, and bowing very low, “ may I be permitted to presume to hope that you will allow me to have the pleasure — ”

“ I don’t *think* I am engaged,” said Miss Teresa, with a dreadful affectation of indifference — “ but, really — so many — ”

Horatio looked handsomely miserable.

“ I shall be most happy,” simpered the interesting Teresa, at last. Horatio’s countenance brightened up, like an old hat in a shower of rain.

“ A very genteel young man, certainly ! ” said the gratified Mr. Malderton, as the obsequious Sparkins and his partner joined the quadrille which was just forming.

“ He has a remarkably good address,” said Mr. Frederick.

“ Yes, he is a prime fellow,” interposed Tom, who always managed to put his foot in it — “ he talks just like an auctioneer.”

“ Tom ! ” said his father solemnly, “ I think I desired you, before, not to be a fool.” Tom looked as happy as a cock on a drizzly morning.

“ How delightful ! ” said the interesting Horatio to his partner, as they promenaded the room at the conclusion of the set — “ how delightful, how refreshing it is, to

retire from the cloudy storms, the vicissitudes, and the troubles, of life, even if it be but for a few short fleeting moments ; and to spend those moments, fading and evanescent though they be, in the delightful, the blessed, society of one individual — whose frowns would be death, whose coldness would be madness, whose falsehood would be ruin, whose constancy would be bliss ; the possession of whose affection would be the brightest and best reward that Heaven could bestow on man !”

“ What feeling ! what sentiment !” thought Miss Teresa, as she leaned more heavily on her companion’s arm.

“ But enough — enough !” resumed the elegant Sparkins, with a theatrical air. “ What have I said ? what have I — I — to do with sentiments like these ! Miss Malderton —” here he stopped short — “ may I hope to be permitted to offer the humble tribute of — ”

“ Really, Mr. Sparkins,” returned the enraptured Teresa, blushing in the sweetest confusion, “ I must refer you to papa. I never can, without his consent, venture to — ”

“ Surely he cannot object — ”

“ Oh, yes. Indeed, indeed, you know him not !” interrupted Miss Teresa, well knowing there was nothing to fear, but wishing to make the interview resemble a scene in some romantic novel.

“ He cannot object to my offering you a glass of negus,” returned the adorable Sparkins, with some surprise.

“ Is that all ?” thought the disappointed Teresa. “ What a fuss about nothing !”

“ It will give me the greatest pleasure, sir, to see you to dinner at Oak Lodge, Camberwell, on Sunday next at

five o'clock, if you have no better engagement," said Mr. Malderton, at the conclusion of the evening, as he and his sons were standing in conversation with Mr. Horatio Sparkins.

Horatio bowed his acknowledgments, and accepted the flattering invitation.

"I must confess," continued the father, offering his snuff-box to his new acquaintance, "that I don't enjoy these assemblies half so much as the comfort — I had almost said the luxury — of Oak Lodge. They have no great charms for an elderly man."

"And, after all, sir, what is man?" said the metaphysical Sparkins. "I say, what is man?"

"Ah! very true," said Mr. Malderton; "very true."

"We know that we live and breathe," continued Horatio; "that we have wants and wishes, desires and appetites —"

"Certainly," said Mr. Frederick Malderton, looking profound.

"I say, we know that we exist," repeated Horatio, raising his voice, "but there, we stop; there is an end to our knowledge; there, is the summit of our attainments; there, is the termination of our ends. What more do we know?"

"Nothing," replied Mr. Frederick — than whom no one was more capable of answering for himself in that particular. Tom was about to hazard something, but, fortunately for his reputation, he caught his father's angry eye, and slunk off like a puppy convicted of petty larceny.

"Upon my word," said Mr. Malderton the elder, as they were returning home in the Fly, "that Mr. Sparkins is a wonderful young man. Such surprising knowl-

edge ! such extraordinary information ! and such a splendid mode of expressing himself ! ”

“ I think he must be somebody in disguise,” said Miss Marianne. “ How charmingly romantic ! ”

“ He talks very loud and nicely,” timidly observed Tom, “ but I don’t exactly understand what he means.”

“ I almost begin to despair of *your* understanding anything, Tom,” said his father, who, of course, had been much enlightened by Mr. Horatio Sparkins’ conversation.

“ It strikes me, Tom,” said Miss Teresa, “ that you have made yourself very ridiculous this evening.”

“ No doubt of it,” cried everybody — and the unfortunate Tom reduced himself into the least possible space. That night, Mr. and Mrs. Malderton had a long conversation respecting their daughter’s prospects and future arrangements. Miss Teresa went to bed, considering whether, in the event of her marrying a title, she could conscientiously encourage the visits of her present associates ; and dreamed, all night, of disguised noblemen, large routs, ostrich plumes, bridal favors, and Horatio Sparkins.

Various surmises were hazarded on the Sunday morning, as to the mode of conveyance which the anxiously expected Horatio would adopt. Did he keep a gig ? — was it possible he could come on horseback ? — or would he patronize the stage ? These, and various other conjectures of equal importance, engrossed the attention of Mrs. Malderton and her daughters during the whole morning after church.

“ Upon my word, my dear, it’s a most annoying thing that that vulgar brother of yours should have invited himself to dine here to-day,” said Mr. Malderton to his

wife. "On account of Mr. Sparkins's coming down, I purposely abstained from asking anyone but Flamwell. And then to think of your brother — a tradesman — it's insufferable! I declare I wouldn't have him mention his shop, before our new guest — no, not for a thousand pounds! I wouldn't care if he had the good sense to conceal the disgrace he is to the family; but he's so fond of his horrible business, that he *will* let people know what he is."

Mr. Jacob Barton, the individual alluded to, was a large grocer; so vulgar, and so lost to all sense of feeling, that he actually never scrupled to avow that he wasn't above his business: "he'd made his money by it, and he didn't care who know'd it."

"Ah! Flamwell, my dear fellow, how d'ye do?" said Mr. Malderton, as a little spoffish man, with green spectacles, entered the room. "You got my note?"

"Yes, I did; and here I am in consequence."

"You don't happen to know this Mr. Sparkins by name? You know everybody?"

Mr. Flamwell was one of those gentlemen of remarkably extensive information whom one occasionally meets in society, who pretend to know everybody, but in reality know nobody. At Malderton's, where any stories about great people were received with a greedy ear, he was an especial favorite; and, knowing the kind of people he had to deal with, he carried his passion of claiming acquaintance with everybody to the most immoderate length. He had rather a singular way of telling his greatest lies in a parenthesis, and with an air of self-denial, as if he feared being thought egotistical.

"Why, no, I don't know him by that name," returned Flamwell, in a low tone, and with an air of immense

importance. "I have no doubt I know him, though. Is he tall?"

"Middle-sized," said Miss Teresa.

"With black hair?" inquired Flamwell, hazarding a bold guess.

"Yes," returned Miss Teresa, eagerly.

"Rather a snub nose?"

"No," said the disappointed Teresa, "he has a Roman nose."

"I said a Roman nose, didn't I?" inquired Flamwell.

"He's an elegant young man?"

"Oh, certainly."

"With remarkably prepossessing manners?"

"Oh, yes!" said all the family together. "You must know him."

"Yes, I thought you knew him, if he was anybody," triumphantly exclaimed Mr. Malderton. "Who d'ye think he is?"

"Why, from your description," said Flamwell, ruminating, and sinking his voice, almost to a whisper, "he bears a strong resemblance to the Honorable Augustus Fitz-Edward Fitz-John Fitz-Osborne. He's a very talented young man, and rather eccentric. It's extremely probable he may have changed his name for some temporary purpose."

Teresa's heart beat high. Could he be the Honorable Augustus Fitz-Edward Fitz-John Fitz-Osborne! What a name to be elegantly engraved upon two glazed cards, tied together with a piece of white satin ribbon! "The Honorable Mrs. Augustus Fitz-Edward Fitz-John Fitz-Osborne!" The thought was transport.

"It's five minutes to five," said Mr. Malderton, looking at his watch: "I hope he's not going to disappoint us."

"There he is!" exclaimed Miss Teresa, as a loud double-knock was heard at the door. Everybody endeavored to look — as people when they particularly expect a visitor always do — as if they were perfectly unsuspecting of the approach of anybody.

The room-door opened — "Mr. Barton!" said the servant.

"Confound the man!" murmured Malderton. "Ah! my dear sir, how d'ye do! Any news?"

"Why no," returned the grocer, in his usual bluff manner. "No, none partickler. None that I am much aware of. How d'ye do, gals and boys? Mr. Flamwell, sir — glad to see you."

"Here's Mr. Sparkins!" said Tom, who had been looking out at the window, "on *such* a black horse!" There was Horatio, sure enough, on a large black horse, curveting and prancing along, like an Astley's supernumerary. After a great deal of reining in, and pulling up, with the accompaniments of snorting, rearing, and kicking, the animal consented to stop at about a hundred yards from the gate, where Mr. Sparkins dismounted, and confided him to the care of Mr. Malderton's groom. The ceremony of introduction was gone through, in all due form. Mr. Flamwell looked from behind his green spectacles at Horatio with an air of mysterious importance; and the gallant Horatio looked unutterable things at Teresa.

"Is he the Honorable Mr. Augustus what's his name?" whispered Mrs. Malderton to Flamwell, as he was escorting her to the dining-room.

"Why, no — at least not exactly," returned that great authority — "not exactly."

"Who is he then?"

"Hush!" said Flamwell, nodding his head with a grave air, importing that he knew very well; but was prevented, by some grave reasons of state, from disclosing the important secret. It might be one of the ministers making himself acquainted with the views of the people.

"Mr. Sparkins," said the delighted Mrs. Malderton, "pray divide the ladies. John, put a chair for the gentleman between Miss Teresa and Miss Marianne." This was addressed to a man who, on ordinary occasions, acted as half-groom, half-gardener; but who, as it was important to make an impression on Mr. Sparkins, had been forced into a white neckerchief and shoes, and touched up, and brushed, to look like a second footman.

The dinner was excellent; Horatio was most attentive to Miss Teresa, and everyone felt in high spirits, except Mr. Malderton, who, knowing the propensity of his brother-in-law, Mr. Barton, endured that sort of agony which the newspapers inform us is experienced by the surrounding neighborhood when a pot-boy hangs himself in a hay-loft, and which is "much easier to be imagined than described."

"Have you seen your friend, Sir Thomas Noland, lately, Flamwell?" inquired Mr. Malderton, casting a sidelong look at Horatio, to see what effect the mention of so great a man had upon him.

"Why, no — not very lately. I saw Lord Gubbleton the day before yesterday."

"Ah! I hope his lordship is very well?" said Malderton, in a tone of the greatest interest. It is scarcely necessary to say that, until that moment, he had been quite innocent of the existence of such a person.

"Why, yes; he was very well — very well indeed.

He's a devilish good fellow. I met him in the City, and had a long chat with him. Indeed, I'm rather intimate with him. I couldn't stop to talk to him as long as I could wish, though, because I was on my way to a banker's, a very rich man, and a member of Parliament, with whom I am also rather, indeed I may say very, intimate."

"I know whom you mean," returned the host, consequentially — in reality knowing as much about the matter as Flamwell himself. "He has a capital business."

This was touching on a dangerous topic.

"Talking of business," interposed Mr. Barton, from the centre of the table. "A gentleman whom you knew very well, Malderton, before you made that first lucky spec of yours, called at our shop the other day, and —"

"Barton, may I trouble you for a potato," interrupted the wretched master of the house, hoping to nip the story in the bud.

"Certainly," returned the grocer, quite insensible of his brother-in-law's object — "and he said in a very plain manner —"

"*Floury*, if you please," interrupted Malderton again; dreading the termination of the anecdote, and fearing a repetition of the word "shop."

"He said, says he," continued the culprit, after despatching the potato; "says he, how goes on your business? So I said, jokingly — you know my way — says I, I'm never above my business, and I hope my business will never be above me. Ha, ha!"

"Mr. Sparkins," said the host, vainly endeavoring to conceal his dismay, "a glass of wine?"

‘With the utmost pleasure, sir.’

“Happy to see you.”

“Thank you.”

“We were talking the other evening,” resumed the host, addressing Horatio, partly with the view of displaying the conversational powers of his new acquaintance, and partly in the hope of drowning the grocer’s stories — “we were talking the other night about the nature of man. Your argument struck me very forcibly.”

“And me,” said Mr. Frederick. Horatio made a graceful inclination of the head.

“Pray, what is your opinion of woman, Mr. Sparkins?” inquired Mrs. Malderton. The young ladies simpered.

“Man,” replied Horatio, “man, whether he ranged the bright, gay, flowery plains of a second Eden, or the more sterile, barren, and I may say commonplace regions, to which we are compelled to accustom ourselves, in times such as these; man, under any circumstance, or in any place — whether he were bending beneath the withering blasts of the frigid zone, or scorching under the rays of a vertical sun — man, without woman, would be — alone.”

“I am very happy to find you entertain such honorable opinions, Mr. Sparkins,” said Mrs. Malderton.

“And I,” added Miss Teresa. Horatio looked his delight, and the young lady blushed.

“Now it’s my opinion,” said Mr. Barton —

“I know what you’re going to say,” interposed Malderton, determined not to give his relation another opportunity, “and I don’t agree with you.”

“What?” inquired the astonished grocer.

“I am sorry to differ from you, Barton,” said the host,

in as positive a manner as if he really were contradicting a position which the other had laid down, "but I cannot give my assent to what I consider a very monstrous proposition."

"But I meant to say —"

"You never can convince me," said Malderton, with an air of obstinate determination. "Never."

"And I," said Mr. Frederick, following up his father's attack, "cannot entirely agree in Mr. Sparkins's argument."

"What!" said Horatio, who became more metaphysical, and more argumentative, as he saw the female part of the family listening in wondering delight — "What! Is effect the consequence of cause? Is cause the precursor of effect?"

"That's the point," said Flamwell.

"To be sure," said Mr. Malderton.

"Because, if effect is the consequence of cause, and if cause does precede effect, I apprehend you are wrong," added Horatio.

"Decidedly," said the toad-eating Flamwell.

"At least, I apprehend that to be the just and logical deduction?" said Sparkins, in a tone of interrogation.

"No doubt of it," chimed in Flamwell again. "It settles the point."

"Well, perhaps it does," said Mr. Frederick; "I didn't see it before."

"I don't exactly see it now," thought the grocer; "but I suppose it's all right."

"How wonderfully clever he is!" whispered Mrs. Malderton to her daughters, as they retired to the drawing-room.

"Oh, he's quite a love!" said both the young ladies

together ; " he talks like an oracle. He must have seen a great deal of life ! "

The gentlemen being left to themselves, a pause ensued, during which everybody looked very grave, as if they were quite overcome by the profound nature of the previous discussion. Flamwell, who had made up his mind to find out who and what Mr. Horatio Sparkins really was, first broke silence.

" Excuse me, sir," said that distinguished personage, " I presume you have studied for the bar ? I thought of entering once, myself — indeed, I'm rather intimate with some of the highest ornaments of that distinguished profession."

" N—no ! " said Horatio, with a little hesitation ; " not exactly."

" But you have been much among the silk gowns, or I mistake ? " inquired Flamwell, deferentially.

" Nearly all my life," returned Sparkins.

The question was thus pretty well settled in the mind of Mr. Flamwell. He was a young gentleman " about to be called."

" I shouldn't like to be a barrister," said Tom, speaking for the first time, and looking round the table to find somebody who would notice the remark.

No one made any reply.

" I shouldn't like to wear a wig," said Tom, hazarding another observation.

" Tom, I beg you will not make yourself ridiculous," said his father. " Pray listen, and improve yourself by the conversation you hear, and don't be constantly making these absurd remarks."

" Very well, father," replied the unfortunate Tom, who had not spoken a word since he had asked for another

slice of beef at a quarter past five o'clock P. M., and it was then eight.

"Well, Tom," observed his good-natured uncle, "never mind! *I* think with you. *I* shouldn't like to wear a wig. I'd rather wear an apron."

Mr. Malderton coughed violently. Mr. Barton resumed — "For if a man's above his business —"

The cough returned with tenfold violence, and did not cease until the unfortunate cause of it, in his alarm, had quite forgotten what he intended to say.

"Mr. Sparkins," said Flamwell, returning to the charge, "do you happen to know Mr. Delafontaine, of Bedford Square?"

"I have exchanged cards with him; since which, indeed, I have had an opportunity of serving him considerably," replied Horatio, slightly coloring; no doubt, at having been betrayed into making the acknowledgment.

"You are very lucky, if you have had an opportunity of obliging that great man," observed Flamwell, with an air of profound respect.

"I don't know who he is," he whispered to Mr. Malderton, confidentially, as they followed Horatio up to the drawing-room. "It's quite clear, however, that he belongs to the law, and that he is somebody of great importance, and very highly connected."

"No doubt, no doubt," returned his companion.

The remainder of the evening passed away most delightfully. Mr. Malderton, relieved from his apprehensions by the circumstance of Mr. Barton's falling into a profound sleep, was as affable and gracious as possible. Miss Teresa played the "Fall of Paris," as Mr. Sparkins declared, in a most masterly manner, and both of them, assisted by Mr. Frederick, tried over glees and

trios without number ; they having made the pleasing discovery that their voices harmonized beautifully. To be sure, they all sang the first part ; and Horatio, in addition to the slight drawback of having no ear, was perfectly innocent of knowing a note of music ; still, they passed the time very agreeably, and it was past twelve o'clock before Mr. Sparkins ordered the mourning-coach-looking steed to be brought out — an order which was only complied with on the distinct understanding that he was to repeat his visit on the following Sunday.

“ But, perhaps, Mr. Sparkins will form one of our party to-morrow evening ? ” suggested Mrs. M. “ Mr. Malderton intends taking the girls to see the pantomime.” Mr. Sparkins bowed, and promised to join the party in box 48, in the course of the evening.

“ We will not tax you for the morning,” said Miss Teresa, bewitchingly ; “ for ma is going to take us to all sorts of places, shopping. I know that gentlemen have a great horror of that employment.” Mr. Sparkins bowed again, and declared that he should be delighted, but business of importance occupied him in the morning. Flamwell looked at Malderton significantly — “ It’s term time ! ” he whispered.

At twelve o'clock on the following morning, the “ fly ” was at the door of Oak Lodge, to convey Mrs. Malderton and her daughters on their expedition for the day. They were to dine and dress for the play at a friend’s house. First, driving thither with their handboxes, they departed on their first errand to make some purchases at Messrs. Jones, Spruggins, and Smith’s, of Tottenham Court Road ; after which they were to go to Redmayne’s in Bond Street ; thence, to innumerable places that no one ever heard of. The young ladies beguiled

the tediousness of the ride by eulogizing Mr. Horatio Sparkins, scolding their mamma for taking them so far to save a shilling, and wondering whether they should ever reach their destination. At length, the vehicle stopped before a dirty looking ticketed linen-draper's shop, with goods of all kinds, and labels of all sorts and sizes, in the window. There were dropsical figures of seven with a little three-farthings in the corner; "perfectly invisible to the naked eye;" three hundred and fifty thousand ladies' boas, *from* one shilling and a penny halfpenny; real French kid shoes, at two and ninepence per pair; green parasols, at an equally cheap rate; and "every description of goods," as the proprietors said — and they must know best — "fifty per cent. under cost-price."

"Lor! ma, what a place you have brought us to!" said Miss Teresa; "what *would* Mr. Sparkins say if he could see us!"

"Ah! what, indeed!" said Miss Marianne, horrified at the idea.

"Pray be seated, ladies. What is the first article?" inquired the obsequious master of the ceremonies of the establishment, who, in his large white neckcloth and formal tie, looked like a bad "portrait of a gentleman" in the Somerset House exhibition.

"I want to see some silks," answered Mrs. Malderton.

"Directly, ma'am. — Mr. Smith! Where is Mr. Smith?"

"Here, sir," cried a voice at the back of the shop.

"Pray make haste, Mr. Smith," said the M. C. "You never are to be found when you're wanted, sir."

Mr. Smith, thus enjoined to use all possible despatch, leaped over the counter with great agility, and placed himself before the newly arrived customers. Mrs. Mal-



George Cruikshank

derton uttered a faint scream ; Miss Teresa, who had been stooping down to talk to her sister, raised her head, and beheld — Horatio Sparkins !

“ We will draw a veil,” as novel-writers say, over the scene that ensued. The mysterious, philosophical, romantic, metaphysical Sparkins — he who, to the interesting Teresa, seemed like the embodied idea of the young dukes and poetical exquisites in blue silk dressing-gowns, and ditto ditto slippers, of whom she had read and dreamed, but had never expected to behold, was suddenly converted into Mr. Samuel Smith, the assistant at a “ cheap shop ;” the junior partner in a slippery firm of some three weeks’ existence. The dignified evanishment of the hero of Oak Lodge, on this unexpected recognition, could only be equalled by that of a furtive dog with a considerable kettle at his tail. All the hopes of the Maldertons were destined at once to melt away, like the lemon ices at a Company’s dinner ; Almacks was still to them as distant as the North Pole ; and Miss Teresa had as much chance of a husband as Captain Ross had of the northwest passage.

Years have elapsed since the occurrence of this dreadful morning. The daisies have thrice bloomed on Camberwell Green ; the sparrows have thrice repeated their vernal chirps in Camberwell Grove ; but the Miss Maldertons are still unmated. Miss Teresa’s case is more desperate than ever ; but Flamwell is yet in the zenith of his reputation ; and the family have the same predilection for aristocratic personages, with an increased aversion to anything *low*.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BLACK VEIL.

ONE winter's evening towards the close of the year 1800, or within a year or two of that time, a young medical practitioner, recently established in business, was seated by a cheerful fire, in his little parlor, listening to the wind which was beating the rain in pattering drops against the window, and rumbling dismally in the chimney. The night was wet and cold; he had been walking through mud and water the whole day, and was now comfortably reposing in his dressing-gown and slippers, more than half asleep and less than half awake, revolving a thousand matters in his wandering imagination. First, he thought how hard the wind was blowing, and how the cold, sharp rain would be at that moment beating in his face, if he were not comfortably housed at home. Then, his mind reverted to his annual Christmas visit to his native place and dearest friends; he thought how glad they would all be to see him, and how happy it would make Rose if he could only tell her that he had found a patient at last, and hoped to have more, and to come down again, in a few months' time, and marry her, and take her home to gladden his lonely fireside, and stimulate him to fresh exertions. Then, he began to wonder when his first patient would appear, or whether he was destined, by a special dispensation of Providence, never to have any patients at all; and then, he thought about Rose again, and dropped to sleep and dreamed

about her, till the tones of her sweet merry voice sounded in his ears, and her soft tiny hand rested on his shoulder.

There *was* a hand upon his shoulder, but it was neither soft nor tiny; its owner being a corpulent round-headed boy, who, in consideration of the sum of one shilling per week and his food, was let out by the parish to carry medicine and messages. As there was no demand for the medicine, however, and no necessity for the messages, he usually occupied his unemployed hours — averaging fourteen a day — in abstracting peppermint drops, taking animal nourishment, and going to sleep.

“A lady, sir — a lady!” whispered the boy, rousing his master with a shake.

“What lady?” cried our friend, starting up, not quite certain that his dream was an illusion, and half expecting that it might be Rose herself. — “What lady? Where?”

“*There*, sir!” replied the boy, pointing to the glass door leading into the surgery, with an expression of alarm which the very unusual apparition of a customer might have tended to excite.

The surgeon looked towards the door, and started himself, for an instant, on beholding the appearance of his unlooked-for visitor.

It was a singularly tall woman, dressed in deep mourning, and standing so close to the door that her face almost touched the glass. The upper part of her figure was carefully muffled in a black shawl, as if for the purpose of concealment; and her face was shrouded by a thick black veil. She stood perfectly erect; her figure was drawn up to its full height, and though the surgeon *felt* that the eyes beneath the veil were fixed on him, she stood perfectly motionless, and evinced, by no gesture whatever,

the slightest consciousness of his having turned towards her.

"Do you wish to consult me?" he inquired, with some hesitation, holding open the door. It opened inwards, and therefore the action did not alter the position of the figure, which still remained motionless on the same spot.

She slightly inclined her head in token of acquiescence.

"Pray walk in," said the surgeon.

The figure moved a step forward; and then, turning its head in the direction of the boy — to his infinite horror — appeared to hesitate.

"Leave the room, Tom," said the young man, addressing the boy, whose large round eyes had been extended to their utmost width during this brief interview. "Draw the curtain, and shut the door."

The boy drew a green curtain across the glass part of the door, retired into the surgery, closed the door after him, and immediately applied one of his large eyes to the keyhole on the other side.

The surgeon drew a chair to the fire, and motioned the visitor to a seat. The mysterious figure slowly moved towards it. As the blaze shone upon the black dress, the surgeon observed that the bottom of it was saturated with mud and rain.

"You are very wet," he said.

"I am," said the stranger, in a low deep voice.

"And you are ill?" added the surgeon, compassionately, for the tone was that of a person in pain.

"I am," was the reply — "very ill: not bodily, but mentally. It is not for myself, or on my own behalf," continued the stranger, "that I come to you. If I

labored under bodily disease, I should not be out, alone, at such an hour, or on such a night as this; and if I were afflicted with it, twenty-four hours hence, God knows how gladly I would lie down and pray to die. It is for another that I beseech your aid, sir. I may be mad to ask it for him — I think I am; but, night after night through the long dreary hours of watching and weeping, the thought has been ever present to my mind; and though even *I* see the hopelessness of human assistance availing him, the bare thought of laying him in his grave without it makes my blood run cold!" And a shudder, such as the surgeon well knew art could not produce, trembled through the speaker's frame.

There was a desperate earnestness in this woman's manner, that went to the young man's heart. He was young in his profession, and had not yet witnessed enough of the miseries which are daily presented before the eyes of its members, to have grown comparatively callous to human suffering.

"If," he said, rising hastily, "the person of whom you speak be in so hopeless a condition as you describe, not a moment is to be lost. I will go with you instantly. Why did you not obtain medical advice before?"

"Because it would have been useless before — because it is useless even now," replied the woman, clasping her hands passionately.

The surgeon gazed, for a moment, on the black veil, as if to ascertain the expression of the features beneath it; its thickness, however, rendered such a result impossible.

"You *are* ill," he said, gently, "although you do not know it. The fever which has enabled you to bear, without feeling, the fatigue you have evidently under-

gone, is burning within you now. Put that to your lips," he continued, pouring out a glass of water — "compose yourself for a few moments, and then tell me, as calmly as you can, what the disease of the patient is, and how long he has been ill. When I know what it is necessary I should know, to render my visit serviceable to him, I am ready to accompany you."

The stranger lifted the glass of water to her mouth, without raising the veil; put it down again, untasted; and burst into tears.

"I know," she said, sobbing aloud, "that what I say to you now seems like the ravings of fever. I have been told so before, less kindly than by you. I am not a young woman; and they do say, that as life steals on towards its final close, the last short remnant, worthless as it may seem to all beside, is dearer to its possessor than all the years that have gone before, connected though they be with the recollection of old friends long since dead, and young ones — children perhaps — who have fallen off from, and forgotten one as completely as if they had died too. My natural term of life cannot be many years longer, and should be dear on that account; but I would lay it down without a sigh — with cheerfulness — with joy — if what I tell you now were only false, or imaginary. To-morrow morning, he of whom I speak will be, I *know*, though I would fain think otherwise, beyond the reach of human aid; and yet, to-night, though he is in deadly peril, you must not see, and could not serve, him."

"I am unwilling to increase your distress," said the surgeon, after a short pause, "by making any comment on what you have just said, or appearing desirous to investigate a subject you are so anxious to conceal; but

there is an inconsistency in your statement which I cannot reconcile with probability. This person is dying to-night, and I cannot see him when my assistance might possibly avail; you apprehend it will be useless to-morrow, and yet you would have me see him then! If he be, indeed, as dear to you as your words and manner would imply, why not try to save his life before delay and the progress of his disease render it impracticable?"

"God help me!" exclaimed the woman, weeping bitterly, "how can I hope strangers will believe what appears incredible even to myself? You will *not* see him then, sir?" she added, rising suddenly.

"I did not say that I declined to see him," replied the surgeon; "but I warn you, that if you persist in this extraordinary procrastination, and the individual dies, a fearful responsibility rests with you."

"The responsibility will rest heavily somewhere," replied the stranger bitterly. "Whatever responsibility rests with me, I am content to bear, and ready to answer."

"As I incur none," continued the surgeon, "by acceding to your request, I will see him in the morning, if you leave me the address. And what hour can he be seen?"

"*Nine*," replied the stranger.

"You must excuse my pressing these inquiries," said the surgeon. "But is he in your charge now?"

"He is not," was her rejoinder.

"Then, if I gave you instructions for his treatment through the night, you could not assist him?"

The woman wept bitterly, as she replied, "I **could not**."

Finding that there was but little prospect of obtaining

more information by prolonging the interview ; and anxious to spare the woman's feelings, which, subdued at first by a violent effort, were now irrepressible and most painful to witness ; the surgeon repeated his promise of calling in the morning at the appointed hour. His visitor, after giving him a direction to an obscure part of Walworth, left the house in the same mysterious manner in which she had entered it.

It will be readily believed that so extraordinary a visit produced a considerable impression on the mind of the young surgeon ; and that he speculated a great deal and to very little purpose on the possible circumstances of the case. In common with the generality of people, he had often heard and read of singular instances, in which a presentiment of death, at a particular day, or even minute, had been entertained and realized. At one moment he was inclined to think that the present might be such a case ; but, then, it occurred to him that all the anecdotes of the kind he had ever heard were of persons who had been troubled with a foreboding of their own death. This woman, however, spoke of another person — a man ; and it was impossible to suppose that a mere dream or delusion of fancy would induce her to speak of his approaching dissolution with such terrible certainty as she had spoken. It could not be that the man was to be murdered in the morning, and that the woman, originally a consenting party, and bound to secrecy by an oath, had relented, and, though unable to prevent the commission of some outrage on the victim, had determined to prevent his death if possible, by the timely interposition of medical aid ? The idea of such things happening within two miles of the metropolis appeared too wild and preposterous to be entertained beyond the

instant. Then, his original impression that the woman's intellects were disordered, recurred; and, as it was the only mode of solving the difficulty with any degree of satisfaction, he obstinately made up his mind to believe that she was mad. Certain misgivings upon this point, however, stole upon his thoughts at the time, and presented themselves again and again through the long dull course of a sleepless night: during which, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, he was unable to banish the black veil from his disturbed imagination.

The back part of Walworth, at its greatest distance from town, is a straggling miserable place enough, even in these days; but five-and-thirty years ago, the greater portion of it was little better than a dreary waste, inhabited by a few scattered people of questionable character, whose poverty prevented their living in any better neighborhood, or whose pursuits and mode of life rendered its solitude desirable. Very many of the houses which have since sprung up on all sides were not built until some years afterwards; and the great majority even of those which were sprinkled about, at irregular intervals, were of the rudest and most miserable description.

The appearance of the place through which he walked in the morning was not calculated to raise the spirits of the young surgeon, or to dispel any feeling of anxiety or depression which the singular kind of visit he was about to make had awakened. Striking off from the high road, his way lay across a marshy common, through irregular lanes, with here and there a ruinous and dismantled cottage fast falling to pieces with decay and neglect. A stunted tree, or pool of stagnant water, roused into a sluggish action by the heavy rain of the

preceding night, skirted the path occasionally ; and, now and then, a miserable patch of garden-ground, with a few old boards knocked together for a summer-house, and old palings imperfectly mended with stakes pilfered from the neighboring hedges, bore testimony, at once, to the poverty of the inhabitants, and the little scruple they entertained in appropriating the property of other people to their own use. Occasionally, a filthy looking woman would make her appearance from the door of a dirty house, to empty the contents of some cooking utensil into the gutter in front, or to scream after a little slip-shod girl who had contrived to stagger a few yards from the door under the weight of a sallow infant almost as big as herself ; but, scarcely anything was stirring around ; and so much of the prospect as could be faintly traced through the cold damp mist which hung heavily over it, presented a lonely and dreary appearance perfectly in keeping with the objects we have described.

After plodding wearily through the mud and mire ; making many inquiries for the place to which he had been directed ; and receiving as many contradictory and unsatisfactory replies in return ; the young man at length arrived before the house which had been pointed out to him as the object of his destination. It was a small low building, one story above the ground, with even a more desolate and unpromising exterior than any he had yet passed. An old yellow curtain was closely drawn across the window up-stairs, and the parlor shutters were closed, but not fastened. The house was detached from any other, and, as it stood at an angle of a narrow lane, there was no other habitation in sight.

When we say that the surgeon hesitated, and walked a few paces beyond the house, before he could prevail

upon himself to lift the knocker, we say nothing that need raise a smile upon the face of the boldest reader. The police of London were a very different body in that day ; the isolated position of the suburbs, when the rage for building and the progress of improvement had not yet begun to connect them with the main body of the city and its environs, rendered many of them (and this in particular) a place of resort for the worst and most depraved characters. Even the streets in the gayest parts of London were imperfectly lighted at that time, and such places as these were left entirely at the mercy of the moon and stars. The chances of detecting desperate characters, or of tracing them to their haunts, were thus rendered very few, and their offences naturally increased in boldness, as the consciousness of comparative security became the more impressed upon them by daily experience. Added to these considerations, it must be remembered that the young man had spent some time in the public hospitals of the metropolis ; and, although neither Burke nor Bishop had then gained a horrible notoriety, his own observation might have suggested to him how easily the atrocities to which the former has since given his name might be committed. Be this as it may, whatever reflection made him hesitate, he *did* hesitate ; but, being a young man of strong mind and great personal courage, it was only for an instant ; — he stepped briskly back, and knocked gently at the door.

A low whispering was audible, immediately afterwards, as if some person at the end of the passage were conversing stealthily with another on the landing above. It was succeeded by the noise of a pair of heavy boots upon the bare floor. The door-chain was softly unfastened ; the door opened ; and a tall, ill-favored man, with

black hair, and a face as the surgeon often declared afterwards as pale and haggard as the countenance of any dead man he ever saw, presented himself.

"Walk in, sir," he said in a low tone.

The surgeon did so, and the man, having secured the door again, by the chain, led the way to a small back parlor at the extremity of the passage.

"Am I in time?"

"Too soon!" replied the man. The surgeon turned hastily round, with a gesture of astonishment not unmixed with alarm, which he found it impossible to repress.

"If you'll step in here, sir," said the man, who had evidently noticed the action—"if you'll step in here, sir, you won't be detained five minutes, I assure you."

The surgeon at once walked into the room. The man closed the door, and left him alone.

It was a little cold room, with no other furniture than two deal chairs, and a table of the same material. A handful of fire, unguarded by any fender, was burning in the grate, which brought out the damp if it served no more comfortable purpose, for the unwholesome moisture was stealing down the walls, in long, slug-like tracks. The window, which was broken and patched in many places, looked into a small enclosed piece of ground, almost covered with water. Not a sound was to be heard, either within the house, or without. The young surgeon sat down by the fireplace, to await the result of his first professional visit.

He had not remained in this position many minutes, when the noise of some approaching vehicle struck his ear. It stopped; the street-door was opened; a low talking succeeded, accompanied with a shuffling noise of

footsteps, along the passage and on the stairs, as if two or three men were engaged in carrying some heavy body to the room above. The creaking of the stairs, a few seconds afterwards, announced that the new comers having completed their task, whatever it was, were leaving the house. The door was again closed, and the former silence was restored.

Another five minutes elapsed, and the surgeon had resolved to explore the house, in search of some one to whom he might make his errand known, when the room-door opened, and his last night's visitor, dressed in exactly the same manner, with the veil lowered as before, motioned him to advance. The singular height of her form, coupled with the circumstance of her not speaking, caused the idea to pass across his brain, for an instant, that it might be a man disguised in woman's attire. The hysteric sobs which issued from beneath the veil, and the convulsive attitude of grief of the whole figure, however, at once exposed the absurdity of the suspicion; and he hastily followed.

The woman led the way up-stairs to the front room, and paused at the door, to let him enter first. It was scantily furnished with an old deal box, a few chairs, and a tent bedstead, without hangings or cross-rails, which was covered with a patchwork counterpane. The dim light admitted through the curtain which he had noticed from the outside, rendered the objects in the room so indistinct, and communicated to all of them so uniform a hue, that he did not, at first, perceive the object on which his eye at once rested when the woman rushed frantically past him, and flung herself on her knees by the bedside.

Stretched upon the bed, closely enveloped in a linen

wrapper, and covered with blankets, lay a human form, stiff and motionless. The head and face, which were those of a man, were uncovered, save by a bandage which passed over the head and under the chin. The eyes were closed. The left arm lay heavily across the bed, and the woman held the passive hand.

The surgeon gently pushed the woman aside, and took the hand in his.

"My God!" he exclaimed, letting it fall involuntarily — "the man is dead!"

The woman started to her feet and beat her hands together. "Oh! don't say so, sir," she exclaimed, with a burst of passion, amounting almost to frenzy. "Oh! don't say so, sir! I can't bear it! Men have been brought to life, before, when unskilful people have given them up for lost; and men have died, who might have been restored, if proper means had been resorted to. Don't let him lie here, sir, without one effort to save him! This very moment life may be passing away. Do try, sir, — do, for Heaven's sake!" — And while speaking, she hurriedly chafed, first the forehead, and then the breast, of the senseless form before her; and then wildly beat the cold hands, which when she ceased to hold them, fell listlessly and heavily back on the coverlet.

"It is of no use, my good woman," said the surgeon soothingly, as he withdrew his hand from the man's breast. "Stay — undraw that curtain!"

"Why?" said the woman, starting up.

"Undraw that curtain!" repeated the surgeon, in an agitated tone.

"I darkened the room on purpose," said the woman, throwing herself before him as he rose to undraw it. —

"Oh! sir, have pity on me! If it can be of no use, and he is really dead, do not expose that form to other eyes than mine!"

"This man died no natural or easy death," said the surgeon. "I *must* see the body!" With a motion so sudden, that the woman hardly knew that he had slipped from beside her, he tore open the curtain, admitted the full light of day, and returned to the bedside.

"There has been violence here," he said, pointing towards the body, and gazing intently on the face, from which the black veil was now, for the first time, removed. In the excitement of a minute before, the female had thrown off the bonnet and veil, and now stood with her eyes fixed upon him. Her features were those of a woman of about fifty, who had once been handsome. Sorrow and weeping had left traces upon them which not time itself would ever have produced without their aid; her face was deadly pale; and there was a nervous contortion of the lip, and an unnatural fire in her eye, which showed too plainly that her bodily and mental powers had nearly sunk beneath an accumulation of misery.

"There has been violence here," said the surgeon, preserving his searching glance.

"There has!" replied the woman.

"This man has been murdered."

"That I call God to witness he has," said the woman, passionately; "pitilessly, inhumanly murdered!"

"By whom?" said the surgeon, seizing the woman by the arm.

"Look at the butchers' marks, and then ask me!" she replied.

The surgeon turned his face towards the bed, and bent over the body which now lay full in the light of the win-

low. The throat was swollen, and a livid mark encircled it. The truth flashed suddenly upon him.

"This is one of the men who were hanged this morning!" he exclaimed, turning away with a shudder.

"It is," replied the woman, with a cold, unmeaning stare.

"Who was he?" inquired the surgeon.

"*My son*," rejoined the woman; and fell senseless at his feet.

It was true. A companion, equally guilty with himself, had been acquitted for want of evidence; and this man had been left for death, and executed. To recount the circumstances of the case, at this distant period, must be unnecessary, and might give pain to some persons still alive. The history was an every-day one. The mother was a widow without friends or money, and had denied herself necessities to bestow them on her orphan boy. That boy, unmindful of her prayers, and forgetful of the sufferings she had endured for him — incessant anxiety of mind, and voluntary starvation of body — had plunged into a career of dissipation and crime. And this was the result: his own death by the hangman's hands, and his mother's shame, and incurable insanity.

For many years after this occurrence, and when profitable and arduous avocations would have led many men to forget that such a miserable being existed, the young surgeon was a daily visitor at the side of the harmless mad woman; not only soothing her by his presence and kindness, but alleviating the rigor of her condition by pecuniary donations for her comfort and support, bestowed with no sparing hand. In the transient gleam of recollection and consciousness which preceded her death, a prayer for his welfare and protection, as fervent as

mortal ever breathed, rose from the lips of this poor friendless creature. The prayer flew to Heaven and was heard. The blessings he was instrumental in conferring, have been repaid to him a thousand-fold ; but, amid all the honors of rank and station which have since been heaped upon him, and which he has so well earned, he can have no reminiscence more gratifying to his heart than that connected with The Black Veil.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STEAM EXCURSION.

MR. PERCY NOAKES was a law-student, inhabiting a set of chambers on the fourth floor, in one of those houses in Gray's Inn Square which command an extensive view of the gardens, and their usual adjuncts — flaunting nursery-maids, and town-made children, with parenthetical legs. Mr. Percy Noakes was what is generally termed — “a devilish good fellow.” He had a large circle of acquaintance, and seldom dined at his own expense. He used to talk politics to papas, flatter the vanity of mammas, do the amiable to their daughters, make pleasure engagements with their sons, and romp with the younger branches. Like those paragons of perfection, advertising footmen out of place, he was always “willing to make himself generally useful.” If any old lady, whose son was in India, gave a ball, Mr. Percy Noakes was master of the ceremonies ; if any young lady made a stolen match, Mr. Percy Noakes gave her away ; if a

juvenile wife presented her husband with a blooming cherub, Mr. Percy Noakes was either godfather, or deputy godfather; and if any member of a friend's family died, Mr. Percy Noakes was invariably to be seen in the second mourning coach, with a white handkerchief to his eyes, sobbing — to use his own appropriate and expressive description — “like winkin!”

It may readily be imagined that these numerous avocations were rather calculated to interfere with Mr. Percy Noakes's professional studies. Mr. Percy Noakes was perfectly aware of the fact, and had, therefore, after mature reflection, made up his mind not to study at all — a laudable determination, to which he adhered in the most praiseworthy manner. His sitting-room presented a strange chaos of dress-gloves, boxing-gloves, caricatures, albums, invitation-cards, foils, cricket-bats, cardboard drawings, paste, gum, and fifty other miscellaneous articles, heaped together in the strangest confusion. He was always making something for somebody, or planning some party of pleasure, which was his great *forte*. He invariably spoke with astonishing rapidity; was smart, spoffish, and eight-and-twenty.

“Splendid idea, 'pon my life!” soliloquized Mr. Percy Noakes, over his morning's coffee, as his mind reverted to a suggestion which had been thrown out on the previous night, by a lady at whose house he had spent the evening. “Glorious idea! — Mrs. Stubbs.”

“Yes, sir,” replied a dirty old woman with an inflamed countenance, emerging from the bedroom, with a barrel of dirt and cinders. — This was the laundress. “Did you call, sir!”

“Oh! Mrs. Tubbs, I'm going out. If that tailor should call again, you'd better say — you'd better say

I'm out of town, and shan't be back for a fortnight ; and if that bootmaker should come, tell him I've lost his address, or I'd have sent him that little amount. Mind he writes it down ; and if Mr. Hardy should call — you know Mr. Hardy ? ”

“ The funny gentleman, sir ? ”

“ Ah ! the funny gentleman. If Mr. Hardy should call, say I've gone to Mrs. Taunton's about that water-party.”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ And if any fellow calls, and says he's come about a steamer, tell him to be here at five o'clock this afternoon, Mrs. Stubbs.”

“ Very well, sir.”

Mr. Percy Noakes brushed his hat, whisked the crumbs off his inexplicables with a silk handkerchief, gave the ends of his hair a persuasive roll round his forefinger, and sallied forth for Mrs. Taunton's domicile in Great Marlborough Street, where she and her daughters occupied the upper part of a house. She was a good-looking widow of fifty, with the form of a giantess and the mind of a child. The pursuit of pleasure, and some means of killing time, were the sole end of her existence. She doted on her daughters, who were as frivolous as herself.

A general exclamation of satisfaction hailed the arrival of Mr. Percy Noakes, who went threw the ordinary salutations, and threw himself into an easy-chair near the ladies' work-table, with the ease of a regularly established friend of the family. Mrs. Taunton was busily engaged in planting immense bright bows on every part of a smart cap on which it was possible to stick one ; Miss Emily Taunton was making a watchguard ; Miss Sophia

was at the piano, practising a new song — poetry by the young officer, or the police-officer, or the custom-house officer, or some other interesting amateur.

“You good creature!” said Mrs. Taunton, addressing the gallant Percy. “You really are a good soul! You’ve come about the water-party, I know.”

“I should rather suspect I had,” replied Mr. Noakes, triumphantly. “Now come here, girls, and I’ll tell you all about it.” Miss Emily and Miss Sophia advanced to the table.

“Now,” continued Mr. Percy Noakes, “it seems to me that the best way will be, to have a committee of ten, to make all the arrangements, and manage the whole set-out. Then, I propose that the expenses shall be paid by these ten fellows jointly.”

“Excellent, indeed!” said Mrs. Taunton, who highly approved of this part of the arrangements.

“Then, my plan is, that each of these ten fellows shall have the power of asking five people. There must be a meeting of the committee, at my chambers, to make all the arrangements, and these people shall be then named; every member of the committee shall have the power of black-balling any one who is proposed; and one black ball shall exclude that person. This will insure our having a pleasant party, you know.”

“What a manager you are!” interrupted Mrs Taunton again.

“Charming!” said the lovely Emily.

“I never did!” ejaculated Sophia.

“Yes, I think it’ll do,” replied Mr. Percy Noakes, who was now quite in his element. “I think it’ll do. Then you know we shall go down to the Nore, and back, and have a regular capital cold dinner laid out in the cabin

before we start, so that everything may be ready without any confusion : and we shall have the lunch laid out, on deck, in those little tea-garden-looking concerns by the paddle-boxes — I don't know what you call 'em. Then, we shall hire a steamer expressly for our party, and a band, and have the deck chalked, and we shall be able to dance quadrilles all day ; and then, whoever we know that's musical, you know, why they'll make themselves useful and agreeable ; and — and — upon the whole, I really hope we shall have a glorious day, you know ! ”

The announcement of these arrangements was received with the utmost enthusiasm. Mrs. Taunton, Emily, and Sophia, were loud in their praises.

“ Well, but tell me, Percy,” said Mrs. Taunton, “ who are the ten gentlemen to be ? ”

“ Oh ! I know plenty of fellows who'll be delighted with the scheme,” replied Mr. Percy Noakes : “ of course we shall have — ”

“ Mr. Hardy ! ” interrupted the servant, announcing a visitor. Miss Sophia and Miss Emily hastily assumed the most interesting attitudes that could be adopted on so short a notice.

“ How are you ? ” said a stout gentleman of about forty, pausing at the door in the attitude of an awkward harlequin. This was Mr. Hardy, whom we have before described, on the authority of Mrs. Stubbs, as “ the funny gentleman.” He was an Astley-Cooperish Joe Miller — a practical joker, immensely popular with married ladies, and a general favorite with young men. He was always engaged in some pleasure excursion or other, and delighted in getting somebody into a scrape on such occasions. He could sing comic songs, imitate hackney-coachmen and fowls, play airs on his chin, and execute

concertos on the Jews'-harp. He always ate and drank most immoderately, and was the bosom-friend of Mr. Percy Noakes. He had a red face, a somewhat husky voice, and a tremendous laugh.

"How *are* you?" said this worthy, laughing, as if it were the finest joke in the world to make a morning call and shaking hands with the ladies with as much vehemence as if their arms had been so many pump-handles.

"You're just the very man I wanted," said Mr. Percy Noakes, who proceeded to explain the cause of his being in requisition.

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted Hardy, after hearing the statement, and receiving a detailed account of the proposed excursion. "Oh, capital! glorious! What a day it will be! what fun! — But, I say, when are you going to begin making the arrangements?"

"No time like the present — at once, if you please."

"Oh, charming!" cried the ladies. "Pray, do!"

Writing materials were laid before Mr. Percy Noakes, and the names of the different members of the committee were agreed on, after as much discussion between him and Mr. Hardy as if the fate of nations had depended on their appointment. It was then agreed that a meeting should take place at Mr. Percy Noakes's chambers on the ensuing Wednesday evening at eight o'clock, and the visitors departed.

Wednesday evening arrived; eight o'clock came, and eight members of the committee were punctual in their attendance. Mr. Loggins, the solicitor, of Boswell Court, sent an excuse, and Mr. Samuel Briggs, the ditto of Furnival's Inn, sent his brother: much to his (the brother's) satisfaction, and greatly to the discomfiture of Mr. Percy Noakes. Between the Briggses and the

Tauntons there existed a degree of implacable hatred quite unprecedented. The animosity between the Montagues and Capulets, was nothing to that which prevailed between these two illustrious houses. Mrs. Briggs was a widow, with three daughters and two sons ; Mr. Samuel, the eldest, was an attorney, and Mr. Alexander, the youngest, was under articles to his brother. They resided in Portland Street, Oxford Street, and moved in the same orbit as the Tauntons — hence their mutual dislike. If the Miss Briggses appeared in smart bonnets, the Miss Tauntons eclipsed them with smarter. If Mrs. Taunton appeared in a cap of all the hues of the rainbow, Mrs. Briggs forthwith mounted a toque, with all the patterns of the kaleidoscope. If Miss Sophia Taunton learnt a new song, two of the Miss Briggses came out with a new duet. The Tauntons had once gained a temporary triumph with the assistance of a harp, but the Briggses brought three guitars into the field, and effectually routed the enemy. There was no end to the rivalry between them.

Now, as Mr. Samuel Briggs was a mere machine, a sort of self-acting legal walking-stick ; and as the party was known to have originated, however remotely, with Mrs. Taunton, the female branches of the Briggs family had arranged that Mr. Alexander should attend, instead of his brother ; and as the said Mr. Alexander was deservedly celebrated for possessing all the pertinacity of a bankruptcy-court attorney, combined with the obstinacy of that useful animal which browses on the thistle, he required but little tuition. He was especially enjoined to make himself as disagreeable as possible ; and above all, to black-ball the Tauntons at every hazard.

The proceedings of the evening were opened by Mr.

Percy Noakes. After successfully urging on the gentlemen present the propriety of their mixing some brandy-and-water, he briefly stated the object of the meeting, and concluded by observing that the first step must be the selection of a chairman, necessarily possessing some arbitrary — he trusted not unconstitutional — powers, to whom the personal direction of the whole of the arrangements (subject to the approval of the committee) should be confided. A pale young gentleman, in a green stock and spectacles of the same, a member of the honorable society of the Inner Temple, immediately rose for the purpose of proposing Mr. Percy Noakes. He had known him long, and this he would say, that a more honorable, a more excellent, or a better-hearted fellow, never existed. — (Hear, hear!) The young gentleman, who was a member of a debating society, took this opportunity of entering into an examination of the state of the English law, from the days of William the Conqueror down to the present period; he briefly adverted to the code established by the ancient Druids; slightly glanced at the principles laid down by the Athenian lawgivers; and concluded with a most glowing eulogium on picnics and constitutional rights.

Mr. Alexander Briggs opposed the motion. He had the highest esteem for Mr. Percy Noakes as an individual, but he did consider that he ought not to be intrusted with these immense powers — (oh, oh!) — He believed that in the proposed capacity Mr. Percy Noakes would not act fairly, impartially, or honorably; but he begged it to be distinctly understood, that he said this without the slightest personal disrespect. Mr. Hardy defended his honorable friend, in a voice rendered partially unintelligible by emotion and brandy-and-water. The prop-

osition was put to the vote, and there appearing to be only one dissentient voice, Mr. Percy Noakes was declared duly elected, and took the chair accordingly.

The business of the meeting now proceeded with rapidity. The chairman delivered in his estimate of the probable expense of the excursion, and every one present subscribed his proportion thereof. The question was put that "The Endeavor" be hired for the occasion; Mr. Alexander Briggs moved as an amendment, that the word "Fly" be substituted for the word "Endeavor;" but after some debate consented to withdraw his opposition. The important ceremony of balloting then commenced. A tea-caddy was placed on a table in a dark corner of the apartment, and every one was provided with two backgammon men, one black and one white.

The chairman with great solemnity then read the following list of the guests whom he proposed to introduce: — Mrs. Taunton and two daughters, Mr. Wizzle, Mr. Simson. The names were respectively balloted for, and Mrs. Taunton and her daughters were declared to be black-balled. Mr. Percy Noakes and Mr. Hardy exchanged glances.

"Is your list prepared, Mr. Briggs?" inquired the chairman.

"It is," replied Alexander, delivering in the following: "Mrs. Briggs and three daughters, Mr. Samuel Briggs." The previous ceremony was repeated, and Mrs. Briggs and three daughters were declared to be black balled. Mr. Alexander Briggs looked rather foolish, and the remainder of the company appeared somewhat overawed by the mysterious nature of the proceedings.

The balloting proceeded; but, one little circumstance

which Mr. Percy Noakes had not originally foreseen, prevented the system from working quite as well as he had anticipated. Everybody was black-balled. Mr. Alexander Briggs, by way of retaliation, exercised his power of exclusion in every instance, and the result was, that after three hours had been consumed in hard balloting, the names of only three gentlemen were found to have been agreed to. In this dilemma what was to be done? either the whole plan must fall to the ground, or a compromise must be effected. The latter alternative was preferable; and Mr. Percy Noakes therefore proposed that the form of balloting should be dispensed with, and that every gentleman should merely be required to state whom he intended to bring. The proposal was acceded to; the Tauntons and the Briggses were reinstated; and the party was formed.

The next Wednesday was fixed for the eventful day, and it was unanimously resolved that every member of the committee should wear a piece of blue sarsenet ribbon round his left arm. It appeared from the statement of Mr. Percy Noakes, that the boat belonged to the General Steam Navigation Company, and was then lying off the Custom House; and, as he proposed that the dinner and wines should be provided by an eminent city purveyor, it was arranged that Mr. Percy Noakes should be on board by seven o'clock to superintend the arrangements, and that the remaining members of the committee, together with the company generally, should be expected to join her by nine o'clock. More brandy-and-water was despatched; several speeches were made by the different law students present; thanks were voted to the chairman; and the meeting separated.

The weather had been beautiful up to this period, and

beautiful it continued to be. Sunday passed over, and Mr. Percy Noakes became unusually fidgety — rushing, constantly, to and from the Steam Packet Wharf, to the astonishment of the clerks, and the great emolument of the Holborn cabmen. Tuesday arrived, and the anxiety of Mr. Percy Noakes knew no bounds. He was every instant running to the window, to look out for clouds; and Mr. Hardy astonished the whole square by practising a new comic song for the occasion, in the chairman's chambers.

Uneasy were the slumbers of Mr. Percy Noakes that night; he tossed and tumbled about, and had confused dreams of steamers starting off, and gigantic clocks with the hands pointing to a quarter past nine, and the ugly face of Mr. Alexander Briggs looking over the boat's side, and grinning, as if in derision of his fruitless attempts to move. He made a violent effort to get on board, and awoke. The bright sun was shining cheerfully into the bedroom, and Mr. Percy Noakes started up for his watch, in the dreadful expectation of finding his worst dreams realized.

It was just five o'clock. He calculated the time — he should be a good half-hour dressing himself; and as it was a lovely morning, and the tide would be then running down, he would walk leisurely to Strand Lane, and have a boat to the Custom House.

He dressed himself, took a hasty apology for a breakfast, and sallied forth. The streets looked as lonely and deserted as if they had been crowded, overnight, for the last time. Here and there, an early apprentice, with quenched-looking sleepy eyes, was taking down the shutters of a shop; and a policeman or milk-woman might occasionally be seen pacing slowly along; but the ser

vants had not yet begun to clean the doors, or light the kitchen fires, and London looked the picture of desolation. At the corner of a by-street, near Temple Bar, was stationed a "street-breakfast." The coffee was boiling over a charcoal fire, and large slices of bread and butter were piled one upon the other, like deals in a timber-yard. The company were seated on a form, which, with a view both to security and comfort, was placed against a neighboring wall. Two young men, whose uproarious mirth and disordered dress bespoke the conviviality of the preceding evening, were treating three "ladies" and an Irish laborer. A little sweep was standing at a short distance, casting a longing eye at the tempting delicacies; and a policeman was watching the group from the opposite side of the street. The wan looks and gaudy finery of the thinly-clad women contrasted as strangely with the gay sunlight as did their forced merriment with the boisterous hilarity of the two young men, who, now and then, varied their amusements by "bonneting" the proprietor of this itinerant coffee-house.

Mr. Percy Noakes walked briskly by, and when he turned down Strand Lane, and caught a glimpse of the glistening water, he thought he had never felt so important or so happy in his life.

"Boat, sir!" cried one of the three watermen who were mopping out their boats, and all whistling. "Boat, sir!"

"No," replied Mr. Percy Noakes, rather sharply; for the inquiry was not made in a manner at all suitable to his dignity.

"Would you prefer a wessel, sir?" inquired another, o the infinite delight of the "Jack-in-the-water."

Mr. Percy Noakes replied with a look of supreme contempt.

"Did you want to be put on board a steamer, sir?" inquired an old fireman-waterman, very confidentially. He was dressed in a faded red suit, just the color of the cover of a very old Court-Guide.

"Yes, make haste — the Endeavor — off the Custom House."

"Endeavor!" cried the man who had convulsed the "Jack" before. "Vy, I see the Endeavor go up half an hour ago."

"So did I," said another; "and I should think she'd gone down by this time, for she's a precious sight too full of ladies and gen'lemen."

Mr. Percy Noakes affected to disregard these representations, and stepped into the boat, which the old man, by dint of scrambling, and shoving, and grating, had brought up to the causeway. "Shove her off!" cried Mr. Percy Noakes, and away the boat glided down the river; Mr. Percy Noakes seated on the recently mopped seat, and the watermen at the stairs offering to bet any reasonable sum that he'd never reach the "Custom-us."

"Here she is, by Jove!" said the delighted Percy, as they ran alongside the Endeavor.

"Hold hard!" cried the steward over the side, and Mr. Percy Noakes jumped on board.

"Hope you will find everything as you wished, sir. She looks uncommon well this morning."

"She does, indeed," replied the manager, in a state of ecstasy which it is impossible to describe. The deck was scrubbed, and the seats were scrubbed, and there **was** a bench for the band, and a place for dancing, and a **pile** of camp-stools, and an awning; and then Mr. Percy

Noakes bustled down below, and there were the pastry-cook's men, and the steward's wife, laying out the dinner on two tables the whole length of the cabin ; and then, Mr. Percy Noakes took off his coat, and rushed backwards and forwards, doing nothing, but quite convinced he was assisting everybody ; and the steward's wife laughed till she cried, and Mr. Percy Noakes panted with the violence of his exertions. And then, the bell at London Bridge Wharf rang ; and a Margate boat was just starting ; and a Gravesend boat was just starting, and people shouted, and porters ran down the steps with luggage that would crush any men but porters ; and sloping boards, with bits of wood nailed on them were placed between the outside boat and the inside boat ; and the passengers ran along them, and looked like so many fowls coming out of an area ; and then the bell ceased, and the boards were taken away, and the boats started, and the whole scene was one of the most delightful bustle and confusion.

The time wore on ; half-past eight o'clock arrived : the pastrycook's men went ashore ; the dinner was completely laid out ; and Mr. Percy Noakes locked the principal cabin, and put the key in his pocket, in order that it might be suddenly disclosed, in all its magnificence, to the eyes of the astonished company. The band came on board and so did the wine.

Ten minutes to nine, and the committee embarked in a body. There was Mr. Hardy, in a blue jacket and waistcoat, white trousers, silk stockings, and pumps — in full aquatic costume, with a straw hat on his head, and an immense telescope under his arm ; and there was the young gentleman with the green spectacles, with nankeen inexplicables, with a ditto waistcoat and bright but-

tons, like the pictures of Paul — not the saint, but he of Virginia notoriety. The remainder of the committee, dressed in white hats, light jackets, waistcoats, and trousers, looked something between waiters and West India planters.

Nine o'clock struck, and the company arrived in shoals. Mr. Samuel Briggs, Mrs. Briggs, and the Misses Briggs, made their appearance in a smart private wherry. The three guitars, in their respective dark green cases, were carefully stowed away in the bottom of the boat, accompanied by two immense portfolios of music, which it would take at least a week's incessant playing to get through. The Tauntons arrived at the same moment with more music, and a lion — a gentleman with a bass voice and an incipient red moustache. The colors of the Taunton party were pink; those of the Briggses a light blue. The Tauntons had artificial flowers in their bonnets; here the Briggses gained a decided advantage — they wore feathers.

"How d'ye do, dear?" said the Misses Briggs to the Misses Taunton. (The word "dear" among girls is frequently synonymous with "wretch.")

"Quite well, thank you, dear," replied the Misses Taunton to the Misses Briggs; and then there was such a kissing, and congratulating, and shaking of hands, as might have induced one to suppose that the two families were the best friends in the world, instead of each wishing the other overboard, as they most sincerely did.

Mr. Percy Noakes received the visitors, and bowed to the strange gentleman, as if he should like to know who he was. This was just what Mrs. Taunton wanted. Here was an opportunity to astonish the Briggses.

"Oh! I beg your pardon," said the general of the

Taunton party, with a careless air. — “Captain Helves — Mr. Percy Noakes — Mrs. Briggs — Captain Helves.”

Mr. Percy Noakes bowed very low; the gallant captain did the same with all due ferocity, and the Briggses were clearly overcome.

“Our friend, Mr. Wizzle, being unfortunately prevented from coming,” resumed Mrs. Taunton, “I did myself the pleasure of bringing the captain, whose musical talents I knew would be a great acquisition.”

“In the name of the committee I have to thank you for doing so, and to offer you welcome, sir,” replied Percy. (Here the scraping was renewed.) “But pray be seated — won’t you walk aft? Captain, will you conduct Miss Taunton? — Miss Briggs, will you allow me?”

“Where could they have picked up that military man?” inquired Mrs. Briggs of Miss Kate Briggs, as they followed the little party.

“I can’t imagine, replied Miss Kate, bursting with vexation; for the very fierce air with which the gallant captain regarded the company had impressed her with a high sense of his importance.

Boat after boat came alongside, and guest after guest arrived. The invites had been excellently arranged: Mr. Percy Noakes having considered it as important that the number of young men should exactly tally with that of the young ladies, as that the quantity of knives on board should be in precise proportion to the forks.

“Now, is every one on board?” inquired Mr. Percy Noakes. The committee (who, with their bits of blue ribbon, looked as if they were all going to be bled) bustled about to ascertain the fact, and reported that they might safely start.

"Go on!" cried the master of the boat from the top of one of the paddle-boxes.

"Go on!" echoed the boy, who was stationed over the hatchway to pass the directions down to the engineer; and away went the vessel with that agreeable noise which is peculiar to steamers, and which is composed of a mixture of creaking, gushing, clanging, and snorting.

"Hoi—oi—oi—oi—oi—oi—o—i—i—i!" shouted half a dozen voices from a boat, a quarter of a mile astern.

"Ease her!" cried the captain: "do these people belong to us, sir?"

"Noakes," exclaimed Hardy, who had been looking at every object, far and near, through the large telescope, "it's the Fleetwoods and the Wakefields — and two children with them, by Jove!"

"What a shame to bring children!" said everybody; "how very inconsiderate!"

"I say, it would be a good joke to pretend not to see 'em, wouldn't it?" suggested Hardy, to the immense delight of the company generally. A council of war was hastily held, and it was resolved that the new comers should be taken on board, on Mr. Hardy's solemnly pledging himself to tease the children during the whole of the day.

"Stop her!" cried the captain.

"Stop her!" repeated the boy; whizz went the steam, and all the young ladies, as in duty bound, screamed in concert. They were only appeased by the assurance of the martial Helves, that the escape of steam consequent on stopping a vessel was seldom attended with any great loss of human life.

Two men ran to the side; and after some shouting,

and swearing, and angling for the wherry with a boat-hook, Mr. Fleetwood, and Mrs. Fleetwood, and Master Fleetwood, and Mr. Wakefield, and Mrs. Wakefield, and Miss Wakefield, were safely deposited on the deck. The girl was about six years old, the boy about four; the former was dressed in a white frock with a pink sash and dog's-eared-looking little spencer: a straw bonnet and green veil, six inches by three and a half; the latter was attired for the occasion in a nankeen frock, between the bottom of which, and the top of his plaid socks, a considerable portion of two small mottled legs was discernible. He had a light blue cap with a gold band and tassel on his head, and a damp piece of gingerbread in his hand, with which he had slightly embossed his countenance.

The boat once more started off; the band played "Off she goes;" the major part of the company conversed cheerfully in groups; and the old gentlemen walked up and down the deck in pairs, as perseveringly and gravely as if they were doing a match against time for an immense stake. They ran briskly down the Pool; the gentlemen pointed out the Docks, the Thames Police Office, and other elegant public edifices; and the young ladies exhibited a proper display of horror at the appearance of the coal-whippers and ballast-heavers. Mr. Hardy told stories to the married ladies, at which they laughed very much in their pocket-handkerchiefs, and hit him on the knuckles with their fans, declaring him to be "a naughty man — a shocking creature" — and so forth; and Captain Helves gave slight descriptions of battles, and duels, with a most bloodthirsty air, which made him the admiration of the women, and the envy of the men. Quadrilling commenced; Captain Helves

danced one set with Miss Emily Taunton, and another set with Miss Sophia Taunton. Mrs. Taunton was in ecstasies. The victory appeared to be complete; but alas! the inconstancy of man! Having performed this necessary duty, he attached himself solely to Miss Julia Briggs, with whom he danced no less than three sets consecutively, and from whose side he evinced no intention of stirring for the remainder of the day.

Mr. Hardy, having played one or two very brilliant fantasias on the Jews'-harp, and having frequently repeated the exquisitely amusing joke of slyly chalking a large cross on the back of some member of the committee, Mr. Percy Noakes expressed his hope that some of their musical friends would oblige the company by a display of their abilities.

"Perhaps," he said in a very insinuating manner, "Captain Helves will oblige us?" Mrs. Taunton's countenance lighted up, for the captain only sang duets, and couldn't sing them with anybody but one of her daughters.

"Really," said that warlike individual, "I should be very happy, but —"

"Oh! pray do," cried all the young ladies.

"Miss Sophia, have you any objection to join in a duet?"

"Oh! not the slightest;" returned the young lady, in a tone which clearly showed she had the greatest possible objection.

"Shall I accompany you, dear?" inquired one of the Miss Briggses, with the bland intention of spoiling the effect.

"Very much obliged to you, Miss Briggs, sharply retorted Mrs. Taunton, who saw through the manoeuvre

vre; "my daughters always sing without accompaniments."

"And without voices," tittered Mrs. Briggs, in a low tone.

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Taunton, reddening, for she guessed the tenor of the observation, though she had not heard it clearly — "Perhaps it would be as well for some people, if their voices were not quite so audible as they are to other people."

"And, perhaps, if gentlemen who are kidnapped to pay attention to some persons' daughters, had not sufficient discernment to pay attention to other persons' daughters," returned Mrs. Briggs, "some persons would not be so ready to display that ill-temper which, thank God, distinguishes them from other persons."

"Persons!" ejaculated Mrs. Taunton.

"Persons," replied Mrs. Briggs.

"Insolence!"

"Creature!"

"Hush! hush!" interrupted Mr. Percy Noakes, who was one of the very few by whom this dialogue had been overheard. "Hush! — pray, silence for the duet."

After a great deal of preparatory crowing and humming, the captain began the following duet from the opera of "Paul and Virginia," in that grunting tone in which a man gets down, Heaven knows where, without the remotest chance of ever getting up again. This, in private circles, is frequently designated "a bass voice."

"See (sung the captain) from o—ce—an ri—sing
Bright flames the or—b of d—ay.
From yon gro—ove, the varied so—ongs—"

Here, the singer was interrupted by varied cries of the most dreadful description, proceeding from some

grove in the immediate vicinity of the starboard paddle-box.

"My child!" screamed Mrs. Fleetwood. "My child! it is his voice — I know it."

Mr. Fleetwood, accompanied by several gentlemen, here rushed to the quarter from whence the noise proceeded, and an exclamation of horror burst from the company; the general impression being, that the little innocent had either got his head in the water, or his legs in the machinery.

"What is the matter?" shouted the agonized father, as he returned with the child in his arms.

"Oh! oh! oh!" screamed the small sufferer again.

"What is the matter, dear?" inquired the father, once more — hastily stripping off the nankeen frock, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the child had one bone which was not smashed to pieces.

"Oh! oh! — I'm so frightened!"

"What at, dear? — what at?" said the mother, soothing the sweet infant.

"Oh! he's been making such dreadful faces at me," cried the boy, relapsing into convulsions at the bare recollection.

"He! — who?" cried everybody, crowding round him.

"Oh! — him!" replied the child, pointing at Hardy, who affected to be the most concerned of the whole group.

The real state of the case at once flashed upon the minds of all present, with the exception of the Fleetwoods and the Wakefields. The facetious Hardy, in fulfilment of his promise, had watched the child to a remote part of the vessel, and, suddenly appearing before him

with the most awful contortions of visage, had produced his paroxysm of terror. Of course, he now observed that it was hardly necessary for him to deny the accusation; and the unfortunate little victim was accordingly led below, after receiving sundry thumps on the head from both his parents, for having the wickedness to tell a story.

This little interruption having been adjusted, the captain resumed, and Miss Emily chimed in, in due course. The duet was loudly applauded, and, certainly, the perfect independence of the parties deserved great commendation. Miss Emily sung her part, without the slightest reference to the captain; and the captain sang so loud, that he had not the slightest idea what was being done by his partner. After having gone through the last few eighteen or nineteen bars by himself, therefore, he acknowledged the plaudits of the circle with that air of self-denial which men usually assume when they think they have done something to astonish the company.

"Now," said Mr. Percy Noakes, who had just ascended from the fore-cabin, where he had been busily engaged in decanting the wine, "if the Misses Briggs will oblige us with something before dinner, I am sure we shall be very much delighted."

One of those hums of admiration followed the suggestion, which one frequently hears in society, when nobody has the most distant notion what he is expressing his approval of. The three Misses Briggs looked modestly at their mamma, and the mamma looked approvingly at her daughters, and Mrs. Taunton looked scornfully at all of them. The Misses Briggs asked for their guitars, and several gentlemen seriously damaged the cases in their anxiety to present them. Then, there was a very



interesting production of three little keys for the aforesaid cases, and a melodramatic expression of horror at finding a string broken; and a vast deal of screwing and tightening, and winding, and tuning, during which Mrs. Briggs expatiated to those near her on the immense difficulty of playing a guitar, and hinted at the wondrous proficiency of her daughters in that mystic art. Mrs. Taunton whispered to a neighbor that it was "quite sickening!" and the Misses Taunton looked as if they knew how to play, but disdained to do it.

At length, the Misses Briggs began in real earnest. It was a new Spanish composition, for three voices and three guitars. The effect was electrical. All eyes were turned upon the captain, who was reported to have once passed through Spain with his regiment, and who must be well acquainted with the national music. He was in raptures. This was sufficient; the trio was encored; the applause was universal; and never had the Tauntons suffered such a complete defeat.

"Bravo! bravo!" ejaculated the captain;—"Bravo!"

"Pretty! isn't it, sir?" inquired Mr. Samuel Briggs, with the air of a self-satisfied showman. By the by, these were the first words he had been heard to utter since he left Boswell Court the evening before.

"De—lightful!" returned the captain, with a flourish, and a military cough;—"de—lightful!"

"Sweet instrument?" said an old gentleman with a bald head, who had been trying all the morning to look through a telescope, inside the glass of which Mr. Hardy had fixed a large black wafer.

"Did you ever hear a Portuguese tambourine?" inquired that jocular individual.

"Did *you* ever hear a tom-tom, sir?" sternly inquired

the captain, who lost no opportunity of showing off his travels, real or pretended.

"A what?" asked Hardy, rather taken aback.

"A tom-tom."

"Never!"

"Nor a gum-gum?"

"Never!"

"What is a gum-gum?" eagerly inquired several young ladies.

"When I was in the East Indies," replied the captain. (Here was a discovery — he had been in the East Indies!) — "when I was in the East Indies, I was once stopping, a few thousand miles up the country, on a visit at the house of a very particular friend of mine, Ram Chowdar Doss Azuph Al Bowlar — a devilish pleasant fellow. As we were enjoying our hookahs, one evening, in the cool verandah in front of his villa, we were rather surprised by the sudden appearance of thirty-four of his Kit-ma-gars (for he had rather a large establishment there), accompanied by an equal number of Con-su-mars, approaching the house with a threatening aspect, and beating a tom-tom. The Ram started up —"

"Who?" inquired the bald gentleman, intensely interested.

"The Ram — Ram Chowdar —"

"Oh!" said the old gentleman, "I beg your pardon: pray go on."

"— Started up and drew a pistol. 'Helves,' said he, 'my boy,' — he always called me, my boy — 'Helves,' said he, 'do you hear that tom-tom?' 'I do,' said I. His countenance, which before was pale, assumed a most frightful appearance; his whole visage was distorted, and his frame shaken by violent emotions. 'Do you see that

gum-gum?’ said he. ‘No,’ said I, staring about me. ‘You don’t?’ said he. ‘No, I’ll be damned if I do,’ said I; ‘and what’s more, I don’t know what a gum-gum is,’ said I. I really thought the Ram would have dropped. He drew me aside, and with an expression of agony I shall never forget, said in a low whisper — ”

“Dinner’s on the table, ladies,” interrupted the steward’s wife.

“Will you allow me?” said the captain, immediately suiting the action to the word, and escorting Miss Julia Briggs to the cabin, with as much ease as if he had finished the story.

“What an extraordinary circumstance!” ejaculated the same old gentleman, preserving his listening attitude.

“What a traveller!” said the young ladies.

“What a singular name!” exclaimed the gentlemen, rather confused by the coolness of the whole affair.

“I wish he had finished the story,” said an old lady. “I wonder what a gum-gum really is?”

“By Jove!” exclaimed Hardy, who until now had been lost in utter amazement, “I don’t know what it may be in India, but in England I think a gum-gum has very much the same meaning as a hum-bug.”

“How illiberal; how envious!” cried everybody, as they made for the cabin, fully impressed with a belief in the captain’s amazing adventures. Helves was the sole lion for the remainder of the day — impudence and the marvellous are pretty sure passports to any society.

The party had by this time reached their destination, and put about on their return home. The wind, which had been with them the whole day, was now directly in their teeth; the weather had become gradually more and more

overcast ; and the sky, water, and shore, were all of **that** dull, heavy, uniform lead-color, which house-painters daub in the first instance over a street-door which is gradually approaching a state of convalescence. It had been "spitting" with rain for the last half-hour, and now began to pour in good earnest. The wind was freshening very fast, and the waterman at the wheel had unequivocally expressed his opinion that there would shortly be a squall. A slight emotion on the part of the vessel, now and then, seemed to suggest the possibility of its pitching to a very uncomfortable extent in the event of its blowing harder ; and every timber began to creak, as if the boat were an over-laden clothes-basket. Seasickness, however, is like a belief in ghosts — every one entertains some misgivings on the subject, but few will acknowledge any. The majority of the company, therefore, endeavored to look peculiarly happy, feeling all the while especially miserable.

"Don't it rain?" inquired the old gentleman before noticed, when, by dint of squeezing and jamming, they were all seated at table.

"I think it does — a little," replied Mr. Percy Noakes, who could hardly hear himself speak, in consequence of the pattering on the deck.

"Don't it blow?" inquired some one else.

"No — I don't think it does," responded Hardy, sincerely wishing that he could persuade himself that it did not : for he sat near the door, and was almost blown off his seat.

"It'll soon clear up," said Mr. Percy Noakes, in a cheerful tone.

"Oh, certainly !" ejaculated the committee generally.

"No doubt of it !" said the remainder of the com-



pany, whose attention was now pretty well engrossed by the serious business of eating, carving, taking wine, and so forth.

The throbbing motion of the engine was but too perceptible. There was a large, substantial, cold boiled leg of mutton, at the bottom of the table shaking like blanc-mange ; a previously hearty sirloin of beef looked as if it had been suddenly seized with the palsy ; and some tongues, which were placed on dishes rather too large for them, went through the most surprising evolutions ; darting from side to side, and from end to end, like a fly in an inverted wine-glass. Then, the sweets shook and trembled, till it was quite impossible to help them, and people gave up the attempt in despair ; and the pigeons looked as if the birds, whose legs were stuck outside, were trying to get them in. The table vibrated and started like a feverish pulse, and the very legs were convulsed — everything was shaking and jarring. The beams in the roof of the cabin seemed as if they were put there for the sole purpose of giving people headaches, and several elderly gentlemen became ill-tempered in consequence. As fast as the steward put the fire-irons up, they *would* fall down again ; and the more the ladies and gentlemen tried to sit comfortably on their seats, the more the seats seemed to slide away from the ladies and gentlemen. Several ominous demands were made for small glasses of brandy ; the countenances of the company gradually underwent most extraordinary changes ; one gentleman was observed suddenly to rush from table without the slightest ostensible reason, and dart up the steps with incredible swiftness : thereby greatly damaging both himself and the steward, who happened to be coming down at the same moment.

The cloth was removed ; the dessert was laid on the table ; and the glasses were filled. The motion of the boat increased ; several members of the party began to feel rather vague and misty, and looked as if they had only just got up. The young gentleman with the spectacles, who had been in a fluctuating state for some time — at one moment bright, and at another dismal, like a revolving light on the sea-coast — rashly announced his wish to propose a toast. After several ineffectual attempts to preserve his perpendicular, the young gentleman, having managed to hook himself to the centre leg of the table with his left hand, proceeded as follows :

“ Ladies and gentlemen. A gentleman is among us — I may say a stranger — (here some painful thought seemed to strike the orator ; he paused, and looked extremely odd) whose talents, whose travels, whose cheerfulness — ”

“ I beg your pardon, Edkins,” hastily interrupted Mr. Percy Noakes. — “ Hardy, what’s the matter ? ”

“ Nothing,” replied the “ funny gentleman,” who had just life enough left to utter two consecutive syllables.

“ Will you have some brandy ? ”

“ No ! ” replied Hardy in a tone of great indignation, and looking as comfortable as Temple Bar in a Scotch mist ; “ what should I want brandy for ? ”

“ Will you go on deck ? ”

“ No, I will *not*.” This was said with a most determined air, and in a voice which might have been taken for an imitation of anything ; it was quite as much like a guinea-pig as a bassoon.

“ I beg your pardon, Edkins,” said the courteous Percy ; “ I thought our friend was ill. Pray go on.”

A pause.

"Pray go on."

"Mr. Edkins *is* gone," cried somebody.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the steward, running up to Mr. Percy Noakes, "I beg your pardon, sir, but the gentleman as just went on deck — him with the green spectacles — is uncommon bad, to be sure; and the young man as played the wiolin says, that unless he has some brandy he can't answer for the consequences. He says he has a wife and two children, whose werry subsistence depends on his breaking a wessel, and he expects to do so every moment. The flageolet's been werry ill, but he's better, only he's in a dreadful prusperation."

All disguise was now useless; the company staggered on deck; the gentlemen tried to see nothing but the clouds; and the ladies, muffled up in such shawls and cloaks as they had brought with them, lay about on the seats, and under the seats, in the most wretched condition. Never was such a blowing and raining, and pitching and tossing, endured by any pleasure party before. Several remonstrances were sent down below, on the subject of Master Fleetwood, but they were totally unheeded in consequence of the indisposition of his natural protectors. That interesting child screamed at the top of his voice, until he had no voice left to scream with; and then, Miss Wakefield began, and screamed for the remainder of the passage.

Mr. Hardy was observed, some hours afterwards, in an attitude which induced his friends to suppose that he was busily engaged in contemplating the beauties of the deep; they only regretted that his taste for the picturesque should lead him to remain so long in a position

very injurious at all times, but especially so to an individual laboring under a tendency of blood to the head.

The party arrived off the Custom House at about two o'clock on the Thursday morning, dispirited and worn out. The Tauntons were too ill to quarrel with the Briggses, and the Briggses were too wretched to annoy the Tauntons. One of the guitar-cases was lost on its passage to a hackney-coach, and Mrs. Briggs has not scrupled to state that the Tauntons bribed a porter to throw it down an area. Mr. Alexander Briggs opposes vote by ballot — he says from personal experience of its inefficacy; and Mr. Samuel Briggs, whenever he is asked to express his sentiments on the point, says he has no opinion on that or any other subject.

Mr. Edkins — the young gentleman in the green spectacles — makes a speech on every occasion on which a speech can possibly be made: the eloquence of which can only be equalled by its length. In the event of his not being previously appointed to a judgeship, it is probable that he will practise as a barrister in the new Central Criminal Court.

Captain Helves continued his attention to Miss Julia Briggs, whom he might possibly have espoused, if it had not unfortunately happened that Mr. Samuel arrested him in the way of business, pursuant to instructions received from Messrs. Scroggins and Payne, whose town-debts the gallant captain had condescended to collect, but whose accounts, with the indiscretion sometimes peculiar to military minds, he had omitted to keep with that dull accuracy which custom has rendered necessary. Mrs. Taunton complains that she has been much deceived in him. He introduced himself to the family on

board a Gravesend steam-packet, and certainly, therefore, ought to have proved respectable.

Mr. Percy Noakes is as light-hearted and careless as ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GREAT WINGLEBURY DUEL.

THE little town of Great Winglebury is exactly forty-two miles and three quarters from Hyde Park corner. It has a long, straggling, quiet High Street, with a great black and white clock at a small red Town Hall, half-way up — a market-place — a cage — an assembly-room — a church — a bridge — a chapel — a theatre — a library — an inn — a pump — and a Post-office. Tradition tells of a “Little Winglebury,” down some cross-road about two miles off; and, as a square mass of dirty paper, supposed to have been originally intended for a letter, with certain tremulous characters inscribed thereon, in which a lively imagination might trace a remote resemblance to the word “Little,” was once stuck up to be owned in the sunny window of the Great Winglebury Post-office, from which it only disappeared when it fell to pieces with dust and extreme old age, there would appear to be some foundation for the legend. Common belief is inclined to bestow the name upon a little hole at the end of a muddy lane about a couple of miles long, colonized by one wheelwright, four paupers, and a beer-shop; but even this authority, slight as it is, must be regarded with extreme suspicion, inasmuch as the

inhabitants of the hole aforesaid, concur in opining that it never had any name at all, from the earliest ages down to the present day.

The Winglebury Arms, in the centre of the High Street, opposite the small building with the big clock, is the principal inn of Great Winglebury — the commercial inn, posting-house, and excise-office; the “Blue” house at every election, and the Judges’ house at every assizes. It is the headquarters of the Gentlemen’s Whist Club of Winglebury Blues (so called in opposition to the Gentlemen’s Whist Club of Winglebury Buffs, held at the other house, a little further down); and whenever a juggler, or wax-work man, or concert-giver, takes Great Winglebury in his circuit, it is immediately placarded all over the town that Mr. So-and-so, “trusting to that liberal support which the inhabitants of Great Winglebury have long been so liberal in bestowing, has at a great expense engaged the elegant and commodious assembly-rooms, attached to the Winglebury Arms.” The house is a large one, with a red brick and stone front; a pretty spacious hall, ornamented with evergreen plants, terminates in a perspective view of the bar, and a glass case, in which are displayed a choice variety of delicacies ready for dressing, to catch the eye of a new-comer the moment he enters, and excite his appetite to the highest possible pitch. Opposite doors lead to the “coffee” and “commercial” rooms; and a great wide, rambling staircase, — three stairs and a landing — four stairs and another landing — one step and another landing — half a dozen stairs and another landing — and so on — conducts to galleries of bedrooms, and labyrinths of sitting-rooms, denominated “private,” where you may enjoy yourself, as privately as you can in any place

where some bewildered being walks into your room every five minutes, by mistake, and then walks out again, to open all the doors along the gallery until he finds his own.

Such is the Winglebury Arms, at this day, and such was the Winglebury Arms some time since — no matter when — two or three minutes before the arrival of the London stage. Four horses with cloths on — change for a coach — were standing quietly at the corner of the yard, surrounded by a listless group of post-boys in shiny hats and smock-frocks, engaged in discussing the merits of the cattle; half a dozen ragged boys were standing a little apart, listening with evident interest to the conversation of these worthies; and a few loungers were collected round the horse-trough, awaiting the arrival of the coach.

The day was hot and sunny, the town in the zenith of its dulness, and with the exception of these few idlers, not a living creature was to be seen. Suddenly the loud notes of a key-bugle broke the monotonous stillness of the street; in came the coach, rattling over the uneven paving with a noise startling enough to stop even the large-faced clock itself. Down got the outsides, up went the windows in all directions, out came the waiters, up started the hostlers, and the loungers, and the post-boys, and the ragged boys, as if they were electrified — unstrapping, and unchaining, and unbuckling, and dragging willing horses out, and forcing reluctant horses in, and making a most exhilarating bustle. “Lady inside, here!” said the guard. “Please to alight, ma’am,” said the waiter. “Private sitting-room?” interrogated the lady. “Certainly, ma’am,” responded the chambermaid. “Nothing but these ’ere trunks, ma’am?” in-

quired the guard. "Nothing more," replied the lady. Up got the outsides again, and the guard, and the coachman; off came the cloths with a jerk, "All right," was the cry; and away they went. The loungers lingered a minute or two in the road, watching the coach until it turned the corner, and then loitered away one by one. The street was clear again, and the town, by contrast, quieter than ever.

"Lady in number twenty-five," screamed the landlady.
— "Thomas!"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Letter just been left for the gentleman in number nineteen. Boots at the Lion left it. No answer."

"Letter for you, sir," said Thomas, depositing the letter on number nineteen's table.

"For me?" said number nineteen, turning from the window, out of which he had been surveying the scene just described.

"Yes, sir," — (waiters always speak in hints, and never utter complete sentences) — "yes, sir, — Boots at the Lion, sir, — Bar, sir — Missus said number nineteen, sir — Alexander Trott, Esq., sir? — your card at the bar, sir, I think, sir?"

"My name is Trott," replied number nineteen, breaking the seal. "You may go, waiter." The waiter pulled down the window-blind, and then pulled it up again — for a regular waiter must do something before he leaves the room — adjusted the glasses on the sideboard, brushed a place that was *not* dusty, rubbed his hands very hard, walked stealthily to the door, and evaporated.

There was, evidently, something in the contents of the letter of a nature, if not wholly unexpected, cer-

tainly extremely disagreeable. Mr. Alexander Trott laid it down, and took it up again, and walked about the room on particular squares of the carpet, and even attempted, though unsuccessfully, to whistle an air. It wouldn't do. He threw himself into a chair, and read the following epistle aloud : —

“Blue Lion and Stomach-warmer,
Great Winglebury.

Wednesday Morning.

“SIR, — Immediately on discovering your intentions, I left our counting-house, and followed you. I know the purport of your journey ; — that journey shall never be completed.

“I have no friend here, just now, on whose secrecy I can rely. This shall be no obstacle to my revenge. Neither shall Emily Brown be exposed to the mercenary solicitations of a scoundrel, odious in her eyes, and contemptible in everybody else's : nor will I tamely submit to the clandestine attacks of a base umbrella-maker.

“Sir. From Great Winglebury church a footpath leads through four meadows to a retired spot known to the towns-people as Stiffun's Acre.” [Mr. Trott shuddered.] “I shall be waiting there alone, at twenty minutes before six o'clock to-morrow morning. Should I be disappointed in seeing you there, I will do myself the pleasure of calling with a horsewhip.

“HORACE HUNTER.

“PS. There is a gunsmith's in the High Street ; and they won't sell gunpowder after dark — you understand me.

“PPS. You had better not order your breakfast in

the morning until you have met me. It may be an unnecessary expense."

"Desperate-minded villain! I knew how it would be!" ejaculated the terrified Trott. "I always told father, that once start me on this expedition, and Hunter would pursue me like the Wandering Jew. It's bad enough as it is, to marry with the old people's commands, and without the girl's consent; but what will Emily think of me, if I go down there, breathless with running away from this infernal salamander? What *shall* I do? What *can* I do? If I go back to the city, I'm disgraced forever — lose the girl — and, what's more, lose the money too. Even if I did go on to the Browns' by the coach, Hunter would be after me in a post-chaise; and if I go to this place, this Stiffun's Acre (another shudder), I'm as good as dead. I've seen him hit the man at the Pall Mall shooting-gallery in the second button-hole of the waistcoat, five times out of every six, and when he didn't hit him there, he hit him in the head." With this consolatory reminiscence, Mr. Alexander Trott again ejaculated, "What shall I do?"

Long and weary were his reflections, as, burying his face in his hands, he sat ruminating on the best course to be pursued. His mental direction-post pointed to London. He thought of "the governor's" anger, and the loss of the fortune which the paternal Brown had promised the paternal Trott his daughter should contribute to the coffers of his son. Then the words "To Brown's" were legibly inscribed on the said direction-post, but Horace Hunter's denunciation rung in his ears; — last of all it bore, in red letters, the words, "To Stiffun's

Acre ;" and then Mr. Alexander Trott decided on adopting a plan which he presently matured.

First and foremost, he despatched the under-boots to the Blue Lion and Stomach-warmer, with a gentlemanly note to Mr. Horace Hunter, intimating that he thirsted for his destruction, and would do himself the pleasure of slaughtering him next morning, without fail. He then wrote another letter, and requested the attendance of the other boots — for they kept a pair. A modest knock at the room-door was heard. "Come in," said Mr. Trott. A man thrust in a red head with one eye in it, and being again desired to "come in," brought in the body and the legs to which the head belonged, and a fur cap which belonged to the head.

"You are the upper-boots, I think?" inquired Mr. Trott.

"Yes, I am the upper-boots," replied a voice from inside a velvet case with mother-of-pearl buttons — "that is, I'm the boots as b'longs to the house; the other man's my man, as goes errands, and does odd jobs. Top-boots and half-boots, I calls us."

"You're from London?" inquired Mr. Trott.

"Driv a cab once," was the laconic reply.

"Why don't you drive it now?" asked Mr. Trott.

"Over-driv the cab, and driv over a 'ooman," replied the top-boots, with brevity.

"Do you know the mayor's house?" inquired Trott.

"Rather," replied the boots, significantly, as if he had some good reason to remember it.

"Do you think you could manage to leave a letter there?" interrogated Trott.

"Shouldn't wonder," responded boots.

"But this letter," said Trott, holding a deformed note

with a paralytic direction in one hand, and five shillings in the other — “this letter is anonymous.”

“A — what?” interrupted the boots.

“Anonymous — he’s not to know who it comes from.”

“Oh! I see,” responded the reg’lar, with a knowing wink, but without evincing the slightest disinclination to undertake the charge — “I see — bit o’ Sving, eh?” and his one eye wandered round the room, as if in quest of a dark lantern and phosphorus-box. “But, I say!” he continued, recalling the eye from its search, and bringing it to bear on Mr. Trott. “I say, he’s a lawyer, our mayor, and insured in the County. If you’ve a spite agen him, you’d better not burn his house down — blessed if I don’t think it would be the greatest favor you could do him.” And he chuckled inwardly.

If Mr. Alexander Trott had been in any other situation, his first act would have been to kick the man downstairs by deputy; or, in other words, to ring the bell, and desire the landlord to take his boots off. He contented himself, however, with doubling the fee and explaining that the letter merely related to a breach of the peace. The top-boots retired, solemnly pledged to secrecy; and Mr. Alexander Trott sat down to a fried sole, maintenon cutlet, Madeira, and sundries, with greater composure than he had experienced since the receipt of Horace Hunter’s letter of defiance.

The lady who alighted from the London coach had no sooner been installed in number twenty-five, and made some alteration in her travelling-dress, than she indited a note to Joseph Overton, esquire, solicitor, and mayor of Great Winglebury, requesting his immediate attendance on private business of paramount importance — a summons which that worthy functionary lost no time in

obeying ; for after sundry openings of his eyes, divers ejaculations of " Bless me ! " and other manifestations of surprise, he took his broad-brimmed hat from its accustomed peg in his little front office, and walked briskly down the High Street to the Winglebury Arms ; through the hall and up the staircase of which establishment he was ushered by the landlady, and a crowd of officious waiters, to the door of number twenty-five.

" Show the gentleman in," said the stranger lady, in reply to the foremost waiter's announcement. The gentleman was shown in accordingly.

The lady rose from the sofa ; the mayor advanced a step from the door ; and there they both paused, for a minute or two, looking at one another as if by mutual consent. The mayor saw before him a buxom richly-dressed female of about forty ; the lady looked upon a sleek man, about ten years older, in drab shorts and continuations, black coat, neckcloth, and gloves.

" Miss Julia Manners ! " exclaimed the mayor at length, " you astonish me."

" That's very unfair of you, Overton," replied Miss Julia, " for I have known you, long enough, not to be surprised at anything you do, and you might extend equal courtesy to me."

" But to run away — actually run away — with a young man ! " remonstrated the mayor.

" You wouldn't have me actually run away with an old one, I presume ? " was the cool rejoinder.

" And then to ask me — me — of all people in the world — a man of my age and appearance — mayor of the town — to promote such a scheme ! " pettishly ejaculated Joseph Overton ; throwing himself into an arm-chair, and producing Miss Julia's letter from his pocket,

as if to corroborate the assertion that he *had* been asked.

"Now, Overton," replied the lady, "I want your assistance in this matter, and I must have it. In the lifetime of that poor old dear, Mr. Cornberry, who — who —"

"Who was to have married you, and didn't, because he died first; and who left you his property unencumbered with the addition of himself," suggested the mayor.

"Well," replied Miss Julia, reddening slightly, "in the lifetime of the poor old dear, the property had the incumbrance of your management; and all I will say of that, is, that I only wonder *it* didn't die of consumption instead of its master. You helped yourself then: — help me now."

Mr. Joseph Overton was a man of the world, and an attorney; and as certain indistinct recollections of an odd thousand pounds or two, appropriated by mistake, passed across his mind, he hemmed deprecatingly, smiled blandly, remained silent for a few seconds; and finally inquired, "What do you wish me to do?"

"I'll tell you," replied Miss Julia — "I'll tell you in three words. Dear Lord Peter —"

"That's the young man, I suppose —" interrupted the mayor.

"That's the young Nobleman," replied the lady, with a great stress on the last word. "Dear Lord Peter is considerably afraid of the resentment of his family; and we have therefore thought it better to make the match a stolen one. He left town, to avoid suspicion, on a visit to his friend, the Honorable Augustus Flair, whose seat, as you know, is about thirty miles from this, accompanied only by his favorite tiger. We arranged that I

should come here alone in the London coach ; and that he, leaving his tiger and cab behind him, should come on, and arrive here as soon as possible this afternoon."

"Very well," observed Joseph Overton, "and then he can order the chaise, and you can go on to Gretna Green together, without requiring the presence or interference of a third party, can't you?"

"No," replied Miss Julia. "We have every reason to believe — dear Lord Peter not being considered very prudent or sagacious by his friends, and they having discovered his attachment to me — that, immediately on his absence being observed, pursuit will be made in this direction : to elude which, and to prevent our being traced, I wish it to be understood in this house, that dear Lord Peter is slightly deranged, though perfectly harmless ; and that I am, unknown to him, awaiting his arrival to convey him in a post-chaise to a private asylum — at Berwick, say. If I don't show myself much, I dare say I can manage to pass for his mother."

The thought occurred to the mayor's mind that the lady might show herself a good deal without fear of detection ; seeing that she was about double the age of her intended husband. He said nothing, however, and the lady proceeded.

"With the whole of this arrangement dear Lord Peter is acquainted ; and all I want you to do, is, to make the delusion more complete by giving it the sanction of your influence in this place, and assigning this as a reason to the people of the house for my taking the young gentleman away. As it would not be consistent with the story that I should see him until after he has entered the chaise, I also wish you to communicate with him, and inform him that it is all going on well."

"Has he arrived?" inquired Overton.

"I don't know," replied the lady.

"Then how am I to know?" inquired the mayor. "Of course he will not give his own name at the bar."

"I begged him, immediately on his arrival, to write you a note," replied Miss Manners; "and to prevent the possibility of our project being discovered through its means, I desired him to write anonymously, and in mysterious terms to acquaint you with the number of his room."

"Bless me!" exclaimed the mayor, rising from his seat, and searching his pockets — "most extraordinary circumstance — he *has* arrived — mysterious note left at my house in a most mysterious manner, just before yours — didn't know what to make of it before, and certainly shouldn't have attended to it. — Oh! here it is." And Joseph Overton pulled out of an inner coat-pocket the identical letter penned by Alexander Trott. "Is this his lordship's hand?"

"Oh yes," replied Julia; "good, punctual creature! I have not seen it more than once or twice, but I know he writes very badly and very large. These dear, wild young noblemen, you know, Overton —"

"Ay, ay, I see," replied the mayor. — "Horses and dogs, play and wine — grooms, actresses, and cigars — the stable, the green-room, the saloon, and the tavern; and the legislative assembly at last."

"Here's what he says," pursued the mayor; 'Sir, — A young gentleman in number nineteen at the Winglebury Arms, is bent on committing a rash act to-morrow morning at an early hour.' (That's good — he means marrying.) 'If you have any regard for the peace of this town, or the preservation of one — it may be two

— human lives' — What the deuce does he mean by that?"

"That he's so anxious for the ceremony, he will expire if it's put off, and that I may possibly do the same, replied the lady with great complacency.

"Oh! I see — not much fear of that; — well — 'two human lives, you will cause him to be removed to-night.' (He wants to start at once.) 'Fear not to do this on your responsibility: for to-morrow the absolute necessity of the proceeding will be but too apparent. Remember: number nineteen. The name is Trott. No delay; for life and death depend upon your promptitude.' Passionate language, certainly. Shall I see him?"

"Do," replied Miss Julia; "and entreat him to act his part well. I am half afraid of him. Tell him to be cautious."

"I will," said the mayor.

"Settle all the arrangements."

"I will," said the mayor again.

"And say I think the chaise had better be ordered for one o'clock."

"Very well," said the mayor once more; and, ruminating on the absurdity of the situation in which fate and old acquaintance had placed him, he desired a waiter to herald his approach to the temporary representative of number nineteen.

The announcement, "Gentleman to speak with you, sir," induced Mr. Trott to pause half way in the glass of port, the contents of which he was in the act of imbibing at the moment; to rise from his chair; and retreat a few paces towards the window, as if to secure a retreat, in the event of the visitor assuming the form and appearance of Horace Hunter. One glance at Joseph Overton,

however, quieted his apprehensions. He courteously motioned the stranger to a seat. The waiter, after a little jingling with the decanter and glasses, consented to leave the room; and Joseph Overton, placing the broad-brimmed hat on the chair next him, and bending his body gently forward, opened the business by saying in a very low and cautious tone, —

“My lord —”

“Eh?” said Mr. Alexander Trott, in a loud key, with the vacant and mystified stare of a chilly somnambulist.

“Hush — hush!” said the cautious attorney; “to be sure — quite right — no titles here — my name is Overton, sir.”

“Overton?”

“Yes: the mayor of this place — you sent me a letter with anonymous information, this afternoon.”

“I, sir?” exclaimed Trott with ill-dissembled surprise; for, coward as he was, he would willingly have repudiated the authorship of the letter in question. “I, sir?”

“Yes, you, sir; did you not?” responded Overton, annoyed with what he supposed to be an extreme degree of unnecessary suspicion. “Either this letter is yours, or it is not. If it be, we can converse securely upon the subject at once. If it be not, of course I have no more to say.”

“Stay, stay,” said Trott, “it *is* mine; I *did* write it. What could I do, sir? I had no friend here.”

“To be sure, to be sure,” said the mayor, encouragingly, “you could not have managed it better. Well, sir; it will be necessary for you to leave here to-night in a post-chaise and four. And the harder the boys drive, the better. You are not safe from pursuit.”

"Bless me!" exclaimed Trott, in an agony of apprehension, "can such things happen in a country like this? Such unrelenting and cold-blooded hostility!" He wiped off the concentrated essence of cowardice that was oozing fast down his forehead, and looked aghast at Joseph Overton.

"It certainly is a very hard case," replied the mayor with a smile, "that, in a free country, people can't marry whom they like, without being hunted down as if they were criminals. However, in the present instance the lady is willing, you know, and that's the main point, after all."

"Lady willing!" repeated Trott, mechanically. "How do you know the lady's willing?"

"Come, that's a good one," said the mayor, benevolently tapping Mr. Trott on the arm with his broad-brimmed hat; "I have known her, well, for a long time; and if anybody could entertain the remotest doubt on the subject, I assure you I have none, nor need you have."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Trott, ruminating. "This is *very* extraordinary!"

"Well, Lord Peter," said the mayor, rising.

"Lord Peter?" repeated Mr. Trott.

"Oh — ah, I forgot. Mr. Trott, then — Trott — very good, ha! ha! — Well, sir, the chaise shall be ready at half-past twelve."

"And what is to become of me until then?" inquired Mr. Trott, anxiously. "Wouldn't it save appearances, if I were placed under some restraint?"

"Ah!" replied Overton, "very good thought — capital *dea* indeed. I'll send somebody up directly. And if you make a little resistance when we put you in the

chaise, it wouldn't be amiss — look as if you didn't want to be taken away, you know."

"To be sure," said Trott — "to be sure."

"Well, my lord," said Overton, in a low tone, "until then, I wish your lordship a good evening."

"Lord — lordship?" ejaculated Trott again, falling back a step or two, and gazing, in unutterable wonder, on the countenance of the mayor.

"Ha-ha! I see, my lord — practising the madman? — very good indeed — very vacant look — capital, my lord, capital — good evening, Mr. — Trott — ha! ha! ha!"

"That mayor's decidedly drunk," soliloquized Mr. Trott; throwing himself back in his chair, in an attitude of reflection.

"He is a much cleverer fellow than I thought him, that young nobleman — he carries it off uncommonly well," thought Overton, as he went his way to the bar, there to complete his arrangements. This was soon done. Every word of the story was implicitly believed, and the one-eyed boots was immediately instructed to repair to number nineteen, to act as custodian of the person of the supposed lunatic until half-past twelve o'clock. In pursuance of this direction, that somewhat eccentric gentleman armed himself with a walking-stick of gigantic dimensions, and repaired, with his usual equanimity of manner, to Mr. Trott's apartment, which he entered without any ceremony, and mounted guard in, by quietly depositing himself on a chair near the door, where he proceeded to beguile the time by whistling a popular air with great apparent satisfaction.

"What do you want here, you scoundrel?" exclaimed Mr. Alexander Trott, with a proper appearance of indignation at his detention.



The boots beat time with his head, as he looked gently round at Mr. Trott with a smile of pity, and whistled an *adagio* movement.

"Do you attend in this room by Mr. Overton's desire?" inquired Trott, rather astonished at the man's demeanor.

"Keep yourself to yourself, young feller," calmly responded the boots, "and don't say nothin' to nobody." And he whistled again.

"Now, mind!" ejaculated Mr. Trott, anxious to keep up the farce of wishing with great earnestness to fight a duel if they'd let him. "I protest against being kept here. I deny that I have any intention of fighting with anybody. But, as it's useless contending with superior numbers, I shall sit quietly down."

"You'd better," observed the placid boots, shaking the large stick expressively.

"Under protest, however," added Alexander Trott, seating himself, with indignation in his face, but great content in his heart. "Under protest."

"Oh, certainly!" responded the boots; "anything you please. If you're happy, I'm transported; only don't talk too much—it'll make you worse."

"Make me worse?" exclaimed Trott, in unfeigned astonishment: "The man's drunk!"

"You'd better be quiet, young feller," remarked the boots, going through a threatening piece of pantomime with the stick.

"Or mad!" said Mr. Trott, rather alarmed. "Leave the room, sir, and tell them to send somebody else."

"Won't do!" replied the boots.

"Leave the room!" shouted Trott, ringing the bell violently; for he began to be alarmed on a new score.

"Leave that 'ere bell alone, you wretched loo-nattic!" said the boots, suddenly forcing the unfortunate Trott back into his chair, and brandishing the stick aloft. "Be quiet, you mis'erable object, and don't let everybody know there's a madman in the house."

"He *is* a madman! He *is* a madman!" exclaimed the terrified Mr. Trott, gazing on the one eye of the red-headed boots with a look of abject horror.

"Madman!" replied the boots, "dam'me, I think he *is* a madman with a vengeance! Listen to me, you unfort'nate. Ah! would you?" [a slight tap on the head with the large stick, as Mr. Trott made another move towards the bell-handle] "I caught you there! did I?"

"Spare my life!" exclaimed Trott, raising his hands imploringly.

"I don't want your life," replied the boots, disdainfully, "though I think it 'ud be a charity if somebody took it."

"No, no, it wouldn't," interrupted poor Mr. Trott, hurriedly; "no, no, it wouldn't! I—I—'d rather keep it!"

"O werry well," said the boots; "that's a mere matter of taste—ev'ry one to his liking. Hows'ever, all I've got to say is this here: You sit quietly down in that chair, and I'll sit hoppersite you here, and if you keep quiet and don't stir, I won't damage you; but if you move hand or foot till half-past twelve o'clock, I shall alter the expression of your countenance so completely, that the next time you look in the glass you'll ask vether you're gone out of town, and ven you're likely to come back again. So sit down."

"I will—I will," responded the victim of mistakes; and down sat Mr. Trott and down sat the boots too, ex-

actly opposite him, with the stick ready for immediate action in case of emergency.

Long and dreary were the hours that followed. The bell of Great Winglebury church had just struck ten, and two hours and a half would probably elapse before succor arrived. For half an hour, the noise occasioned by shutting up the shops in the street beneath, betokened something like life in the town, and rendered Mr. Trott's situation a little less insupportable; but, when even these ceased, and nothing was heard beyond the occasional rattling of a post-chaise as it drove up the yard to change horses, and then drove away again, or the clattering of horses' hoofs in the stables behind, it became almost unbearable. The boots occasionally moved an inch or two, to knock superfluous bits of wax off the candles, which were burning low, but instantaneously resumed his former position; and as he remembered to have heard, somewhere or other, that the human eye had an unfailing effect in controlling mad people, he kept his solitary organ of vision constantly fixed on Mr. Alexander Trott. That unfortunate individual stared at his companion in his turn, until his features grew more and more indistinct — his hair gradually less red — and the room more misty and obscure. Mr. Alexander Trott fell into a sound sleep, from which he was awakened by a rumbling in the street, and a cry of "Chaise-and-four for number twenty-five!" A bustle on the stairs succeeded; the room-door was hastily thrown open; and Mr. Joseph Overton entered, followed by four stout waiters, and Mrs. Williamson, the stout landlady of the Winglebury Arms.

"Mr. Overton!" exclaimed Mr. Alexander Trott, jumping up in a frenzy, "Look at this man, sir; con-

sider the situation in which I have been placed for three hours past — the person you sent to guard me, sir, was a madman — a madman — a raging, ravaging, furious madman.”

“Bravo!” whispered Overton.

“Poor dear!” said the compassionate Mrs. Williamson, “mad people always thinks other people’s mad.”

“Poor dear!” ejaculated Mr. Alexander Trott, “What the devil do you mean by poor dear! Are you the landlady of this house?”

“Yes, yes,” replied the stout old lady, “don’t exert yourself, there’s a dear! Consider your health, now; do.”

“Exert myself!” shouted Mr. Alexander Trott, “it’s a mercy, ma’am, that I have any breath to exert myself with! I might have been assassinated three hours ago by that one-eyed monster with the oakum head. How dare you have a madman, ma’am, how dare you have a madman, to assault and terrify the visitors to your house?”

“I’ll never have another,” said Mrs. Williamson, casting a look of reproach at the mayor.

“Capital, capital,” whispered Overton again, as he enveloped Mr. Alexander Trott in a thick travelling-cloak.

“Capital, sir!” exclaimed Trott, aloud, “it’s horrible. The very recollection makes me shudder. I’d rather fight four duels in three hours, if I survived the first three, than I’d sit for that time face to face with a madman.”

“Keep it up, my Lord, as you go down-stairs,” whispered Overton, “your bill is paid, and your portmanteau

in the chaise." And then, he added aloud, "Now, waiters, the gentleman's ready."

At this signal, the waiters crowded round Mr. Alexander Trott. One, took one arm; another, the other; a third, walked before with a candle; the fourth, behind, with another candle: the boots and Mrs. Williamson brought up the rear; and down-stairs they went: Mr. Alexander Trott, expressing alternately at the very top of his voice either his feigned reluctance to go, or his unfeigned indignation at being shut up with a madman.

Mr. Overton was waiting at the chaise-door, the boys were ready mounted, and a few hostlers and stable non-descripts were standing round to witness the departure of "the mad gentleman." Mr. Alexander Trott's foot was on the step, when he observed (which the dim light had prevented his doing before) a figure seated in the chaise, closely muffled up in a cloak like his own.

"Who's that?" he inquired of Overton in a whisper.

"Hush, hush," replied the mayor; "the other party of course."

"The other party!" exclaimed Trott, with an effort to retreat.

"Yes, yes; you'll soon find that out, before you go far, I should think — but make a noise, you'll excite suspicion if you whisper to me so much."

"I won't go in this chaise!" shouted Mr. Alexander Trott, all his original fears recurring with tenfold violence. "I shall be assassinated — I shall be —"

"Bravo, bravo," whispered Overton. "I'll push you in."

"But I won't go," exclaimed Mr. Trott. "Help here, help! They're carrying me away against my will. This is a plot to murder me."

"Poor dear!" said Mrs. Williamson again.

"Now, boys, put 'em along," cried the mayor, pushing Trott in and slamming the door. "Off with you, as quick as you can, and stop for nothing till you come to the next stage — all right!"

"Horses are paid, Tom," screamed Mrs. Williamson; and away went the chaise, at the rate of fourteen miles an hour, with Mr. Alexander Trott and Miss Julia Manners carefully shut up in the inside.

Mr. Alexander Trott remained coiled up in one corner of the chaise, and his mysterious companion in the other, for the first two or three miles; Mr. Trott edging more and more into his corner, as he felt his companion gradually edging more and more from hers; and vainly endeavoring in the darkness to catch a glimpse of the furious face of the supposed Horace Hunter.

"We may speak now," said his fellow-traveller, at length; "the post-boys can neither see nor hear us."

"That's not Hunter's voice!" — thought Alexander, astonished.

"Dear Lord Peter!" said Miss Julia, most winningly; putting her arm on Mr. Trott's shoulder. "Dear Lord Peter. Not a word?"

"Why, it's a woman!" exclaimed Mr. Trott, in a low tone of excessive wonder.

"Ah! Whose voice is that?" said Julia; "'tis not Lord Peter's."

"No, — it's mine," replied Mr. Trott.

"Yours!" ejaculated Miss Julia Manners; "a strange man! Gracious heaven! How came you here?"

"Whoever you are, you might have known that I came against my will, ma'am," replied Alexander, "for I made noise enough when I got in."

"Do you come from Lord Peter?" inquired Miss Manners.

"Confound Lord Peter," replied Trott pettishly. "I don't know any Lord Peter. I never heard of him before to-night, when I've been Lord Peter'd by one and Lord Peter'd by another, till I verily believe I'm mad, or dreaming —"

"Whither are we going?" inquired the lady tragically.

"How should I know, ma'am?" replied Trott with singular coolness; for the events of the evening had completely hardened him.

"Stop! stop!" cried the lady, letting down the front glasses of the chaise.

"Stay, my dear ma'am!" said Mr. Trott, pulling the glasses up again with one hand, and gently squeezing Miss Julia's waist with the other. "There is some mistake here; give me till the end of this stage to explain my share of it. We must go so far; you cannot be set down here alone, at this hour of the night."

The lady consented; the mistake was mutually explained, Mr. Trott was a young man, had highly promising whiskers, an undeniable tailor, and an insinuating address — he wanted nothing but valor, and who wants that with three thousand a year? The lady had this, and more; she wanted a young husband, and the only course open to Mr. Trott to retrieve his disgrace was a rich wife. So, they came to the conclusion that it would be a pity to have all this trouble and expense for nothing; and that as they were so far on the road already, they had better go to Gretna Green, and marry each other; and they did so. And the very next preceding entry in the Blacksmith's book, was an entry of the mar-

riage of Emily Brown with Horace Hunter. Mr. Hunter took his wife home, and begged pardon, and *was* pardoned ; and Mr. Trott took *his* wife home, begged pardon too, and was pardoned also. And Lord Peter, who had been detained beyond his time by drinking champagne and riding a steeple-chase, went back to the Honorable Augustus Flair's and drank more champagne, and rode another steeple-chase, and was thrown and killed. And Horace Hunter took great credit to himself for practising on the cowardice of Alexander Trott ; and all these circumstances were discovered in time, and carefully noted down ; and if you ever stop a week at the Winglebury Arms, they will give you just this account of The Great Winglebury Duel.

CHAPTER IX.

MRS. JOSEPH PORTER.

MOST extensive were the preparations at Rose Villa Clapham Rise, in the occupation of Mr. Gattleton (a stockbroker in especially comfortable circumstances), and great was the anxiety of Mr. Gattleton's interesting family, as the day fixed for the representation of the Private Play which had been "many months in preparation," approached. The whole family was infected with the mania for Private Theatricals ; the house, usually so clean and tidy, was, to use Mr. Gattleton's expressive description, "regularly turned out o' windows ;" the large dining-room, dismantled of its furniture and ornaments, presented a strange jumble of flats, flies, wings,

lamps, bridges, clouds, thunder and lightning, festoons and flowers, daggers and foil, and various other messes in theatrical slang included under the comprehensive name of "properties." The bedrooms were crowded with scenery, the kitchen was occupied by carpenters. Rehearsals took place every other night in the drawing-room, and every sofa in the house was more or less damaged by the perseverance and spirit with which Mr. Sempronius Gattleton, and Miss Lucina, rehearsed the smothering scene in "Othello" — it having been determined that that tragedy should form the first portion of the evening's entertainments.

"When we're a *leetle* more perfect, I think it will go admirably," said Mr. Sempronius, addressing his *corps dramatique*, at the conclusion of the hundred and fiftieth rehearsal. In consideration of his sustaining the trifling inconvenience of bearing all the expenses of the play, Mr. Sempronius had been, in the most handsome manner, unanimously elected stage-manager. "Evans," continued Mr. Gattleton, the younger, addressing a tall, thin, pale young gentleman, with extensive whiskers. "Evans, you play *Roderigo* beautifully."

"Beautifully!" echoed the three Miss Gattletons; for Mr. Evans was pronounced by all his lady friends to be "quite a dear." He looked so interesting, and had such lovely whiskers: to say nothing of his talent for writing verses in albums and playing the flute! *Roderigo* simpered and bowed.

"But I think," added the manager, "you are hardly perfect in the — fall — in the fencing-scene, where you are — you understand?"

"It's very difficult," said Mr. Evans, thoughtfully

"I've fallen about, a good deal, in our counting-house lately for practice, only I find it hurts one so. Being obliged to fall backwards you see, it bruises one's head a good deal."

"But you must take care you don't knock a wing down," said Mr. Gattleton, the elder, who had been appointed prompter, and who took as much interest in the play as the youngest of the company. "The stage is very narrow, you know."

"Oh! don't be afraid," said Mr. Evans, with a very self-satisfied air: "I shall fall with my head 'off,' and then I can't do any harm."

"But, egad!" said the manager, rubbing his hands, "we shall make a decided hit in 'Masaniello.' Harleigh sings that music admirably."

Everybody echoed the sentiment. Mr. Harleigh smiled, and looked foolish — not an unusual thing with him — hummed 'Behold how brightly breaks the morning,' and blushed as red as the fisherman's nightcap he was trying on.

"Let's see," resumed the manager, telling the number on his fingers, "we shall have three dancing female peasants, besides *Fenella*, and four fishermen. Then, there's our man Tom; he can have a pair of ducks of mine, and a check shirt of Bob's, and a red nightcap, and he'll do for another — that's five. In the choruses, of course, we can sing at the sides; and in the market-scene, we can walk about in cloaks and things. When the revolt takes place, Tom must keep rushing in on one side and out on the other, with a pickaxe, as fast as he can. The effect will be electrical; it will look exactly as if there were an immense number of 'em. And in the eruption scene

we must burn the red fire, and upset the tea-trays, and make all sorts of noises — and it's sure to do."

"Sure! sure!" cried all the performers *unâ voce* — and away hurried Mr. Sempronius Gattleton to wash the burnt cork off his face, and superintend the "setting up" of some of the amateur-painted, and never-sufficiently-to-be-admired, scenery.

Mrs. Gattleton was a kind, good-tempered, vulgar soul, exceedingly fond of her husband and children, and entertaining only three dislikes. In the first place, she had a natural antipathy to anybody else's unmarried daughters; in the second, she was in bodily fear of anything in the shape of ridicule; lastly — almost a necessary consequence of this feeling — she regarded, with feelings of the utmost horror, one Mrs. Joseph Porter over the way. However, the good folks of Clapham and its vicinity stood very much in awe of scandal and sarcasm; and thus Mrs. Joseph Porter was courted, and flattered, and caressed, and invited, for much the same reason that induces a poor author, without a farthing in his pocket, to behave with extraordinary civility to a two-penny postman.

"Never mind, ma," said Miss Emma Porter, in colloquy with her respected relative, and trying to look unconcerned; "if they had invited me, you know that neither you nor pa would have allowed me to take part in such an exhibition."

"Just what I should have thought from your high sense of propriety," returned the mother. "I am glad 'o see, Emma, you know how to designate the proceeding." Miss P., by the by, had only the week before made "an exhibition" of herself for four days, behind a counter at a fancy fair, to all and every of her Majesty's

liege subjects who were disposed to pay a shilling each for the privilege of seeing some four dozen girls flirting with strangers, and playing at shop.

"There!" said Mrs. Porter, looking out of window; "there are two rounds of beef and a ham going in — clearly for sandwiches; and Thomas, the pastry-cook, says, there have been twelve dozen tarts ordered, besides blanc-mange and jellies. Upon my word! think of the Miss Gattletons in fancy dresses, too!"

"Oh, it's too ridiculous!" said Miss Porter, hysterically.

"I'll manage to put them a little out of conceit with the business, however," said Mrs. Porter; and out she went on her charitable errand.

"Well, my dear Mrs. Gattleton," said Mrs. Joseph Porter, after they had been closeted for some time, and when, by dint of indefatigable pumping, she had managed to extract all the news about the play, "well, my dear, people may say what they please; indeed we know they will, for some folks are *so* ill-natured. Ah, my dear Miss Lucina, how d'ye do? I was just telling your mamma that I have heard it said, that —"

"What?"

"Mrs. Porter is alluding to the play, my dear," said Mrs. Gattleton; "she was, I am sorry to say, just informing me that —"

"Oh, now pray don't mention it," interrupted Mrs. Porter; "it's most absurd — quite as absurd as young What's-his-name saying he wondered how Miss Caroline with such a foot and ankle, could have the vanity to play *Fenella*."

"Highly impertinent, whoever said it," said Mrs. Gattleton, bridling up.

"Certainly, my dear," chimed in the delighted Mrs. Porter; "most undoubtedly! Because, as I said, if Miss Caroline *does* play *Fenella*, it doesn't follow, as a matter of course, that she should think she has a pretty foot; and then — such puppies as these young men are — he had the impudence to say, that —"

How far the amiable Mrs. Porter might have succeeded in her pleasant purpose, it is impossible to say, had not the entrance of Mr. Thomas Balderstone, Mrs. Gattleton's brother, familiarly called in the family "Uncle Tom," changed the course of conversation, and suggested to her mind an excellent plan of operation on the evening of the play.

Uncle Tom was very rich, and exceedingly fond of his nephews and nieces: as a matter of course, therefore, he was an object of great importance in his own family. He was one of the best-hearted men in existence; always in a good temper, and always talking. It was his boast that he wore top-boots on all occasions, and had never worn a black silk neckerchief; and it was his pride that he remembered all the principal plays of Shakspeare from beginning to end — and so he did. The result of this parrot-like accomplishment was, that he was not only perpetually quoting himself, but that he could never sit by and hear a misquotation from the "Swan of Avon" without setting the unfortunate delinquent right. He was also something of a wag; never missed an opportunity of saying what he considered a good thing, and invariably laughed until he cried at anything that appeared to him mirth-moving or ridiculous.

"Well, girls!" said Uncle Tom, after the preparatory ceremony of kissing and how-d'ye-do-ing had been gone through — "how d'ye get on? Know your parts, eh? —"

Lucina, my dear, act ii., scene 1 — place, left — cue —
Unknown fate,' — What's next, eh? — Go on — 'The
heavens — ' "

"Oh, yes," said Miss Lucina, "I recollect —

'The heavens forbid

But that our loves and comforts should increase
Even as our days do grow!" "

"Make a pause here and there," said the old gentleman, who was a great critic. 'But that our loves and comforts should increase' — emphasis on the last syllable, 'crease,' — loud 'even,' — one, two, three, four; then loud again, 'as our days do grow;' emphasis on *days*. That's the way, my dear; trust to your uncle for emphasis. Ah! Sam, my boy, how are you?"

"Very well, thankee uncle," returned Mr. Sempronius, who had just appeared, looking something like a ring-dove, with a small circle round each eye: the result of his constant corking. "Of course we see you on Thursday."

"Of course, of course, my dear boy."

"What a pity it is your nephew didn't think of making you prompter, Mr. Balderstone!" whispered Mrs. Joseph Porter; "you would have been invaluable."

"Well, I flatter myself, I *should* have been tolerably up to the thing," responded Uncle Tom.

"I must bespeak sitting next you on the night," resumed Mrs. Porter; "and then, if our dear young friends here should be at all wrong, you will be able to enlighten me. I shall be so interested."

"I am sure I shall be most happy to give you any assistance in my power."

"Mind, it's a bargain."

"Certainly."

"I don't know how it is," said Mrs. Gattleton to her daughters, as they were sitting round the fire in the evening, looking over their parts, "but I really very much wish Mrs. Joseph Porter wasn't coming on Thursday. I am sure she's scheming something."

"She can't make *us* ridiculous, however," observed Mr. Sempronius Gattleton, haughtily.

The long-looked-for Thursday arrived in due course, and brought with it, as Mr. Gattleton, senior, philosophically observed, "no disappointments to speak of." True, it was yet a matter of doubt whether *Cassio* would be enabled to get into the dress which had been sent for him from the masquerade warehouse. It was equally uncertain whether the principal female singer would be sufficiently recovered from the influenza to make her appearance; Mr. Harleigh, the Masaniello of the night, was hoarse, and rather unwell, in consequence of the great quantity of lemon and sugar-candy he had eaten to improve his voice; and two flutes and a violoncello had pleaded severe colds. What of that? the audience were all coming. Everybody knew his part; the dresses were covered with tinsel and spangles; the white plumes looked beautiful; Mr. Evans had practised falling until he was bruised from head to foot and quite perfect; *Iago* was sure that in the stabbing-scene, he should make "a decided hit." A self-taught deaf gentleman, who had kindly offered to bring his flute, would be a most valuable addition to the orchestra; Miss Jenkins's talent for the piano was too well known to be doubted for an instant; Mr. Cape had practised the violin accompaniment with her, frequently; and Mr. Brown, who had kindly undertaken, at a few hours' notice, to bring his violoncello, would, no doubt, manage extremely well.

Seven o'clock came, and so did the audience; all the rank and fashion of Clapham and its vicinity was fast filling the theatre. There were the Smiths, the Gubbinses, the Nixons, the Dixons, the Hicksons, people with all sorts of names, two aldermen, a sheriff in perspective, Sir Thomas Glumper (who had been knighted in the last reign for carrying up an address on somebody's escaping from nothing); and last, not least, there were Mrs. Joseph Porter and Uncle Tom, seated in the centre of the third row from the stage; Mrs. P. amusing Uncle Tom with all sorts of stories, and Uncle Tom amusing every one else by laughing most immoderately.

Ting, ting, ting! went the prompter's bell at eight o'clock precisely, and dash went the orchestra into the overture to "The Men of Prometheus." The pianoforte player hammered away with laudable perseverance; and the violoncello, which struck in at intervals, "sounded very well, considering." The unfortunate individual, however, who had undertaken to play the flute accompaniment "at sight," found, from fatal experience, the perfect truth of the old adage, "out of sight, out of mind;" for being very near-sighted, and being placed at a considerable distance from his music-book, all he had an opportunity of doing was to play a bar now and then in the wrong place, and put the other performers out. It is, however, but justice to Mr. Brown to say that he did this to admiration. The overture, in fact, was not unlike a race between the different instruments; the piano came in first by several bars, and the violoncello next, quite distancing the poor flute; for the deaf gentleman *too-too'd* away, quite unconscious that he was at all wrong, until apprised by the applause of the audience, that the overture was concluded. A considerable bustle

and shuffling of feet was then heard upon the stage, accompanied by whispers of "Here's a pretty go! — what's to be done?" &c. The audience applauded again, by way of raising the spirits of the performers; and then Mr. Sempronius desired the prompter, in a very audible voice, to "clear the stage, and ring up."

Ting, ting, ting! went the bell again. Everybody sat down; the curtain shook; rose sufficiently high to display several pair of yellow boots paddling about; and there remained.

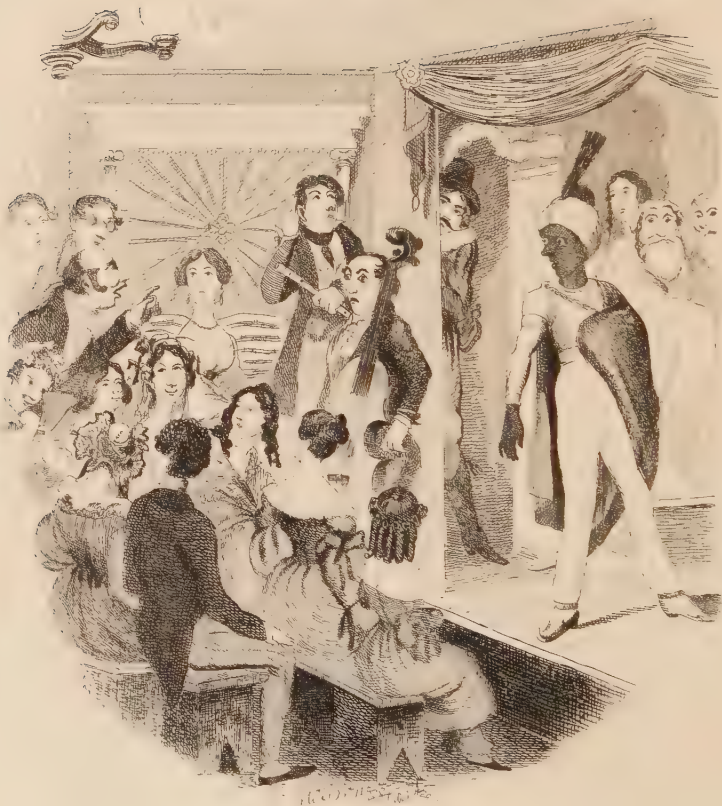
Ting, ting, ting! went the bell again. The curtain was violently convulsed, but rose no higher; the audience tittered; Mrs. Porter looked at Uncle Tom; Uncle Tom looked at everybody, rubbing his hands, and laughing with perfect rapture. After as much ringing with the little bell as a muffin-boy would make in going down a tolerably long street, and a vast deal of whispering, hammering, and calling for nails and cord, the curtain at length rose, and discovered Mr. Sempronius Gattleton, *solus*, and decked for *Othello*. After three distinct rounds of applause, during which Mr. Sempronius applied his right hand to his left breast, and bowed in the most approved manner, the manager advanced, and said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen — I assure you it is with sincere regret, that I regret to be compelled to inform you, that *Iago* who was to have played Mr. Wilson — I beg your pardon, Ladies and Gentlemen, but I am naturally somewhat agitated (applause) — I mean, Mr. Wilson, who was to have played *Iago*, is — that is, has been — or, in other words, Ladies and Gentlemen, the fact is, that I have just received a note, in which I am informed that *Iago* is unavoidably detained at the Post-office this evening. Under these circumstances, I trust — a — a —

amateur performance — a — another gentleman undertaken to read the part — requests indulgence for a short time — courtesy and kindness of a British audience.” Overwhelming applause. Exit Mr. Sempronius Gattleton, and curtain falls.

The audience were, of course, exceedingly good-humored; the whole business was a joke; and accordingly they waited for an hour with the utmost patience, being enlivened by an interlude of rout-cakes and lemonade. It appeared by Mr. Sempronius’s subsequent explanation, that the delay would not have been so great, had it not so happened that when the substitute *Iago* had finished dressing, and just as the play was on the point of commencing, the original *Iago* unexpectedly arrived. The former was therefore compelled to undress, and the latter to dress for his part; which as he found some difficulty in getting into his clothes, occupied no inconsiderable time. At last, the tragedy began in real earnest. It went off well enough, until the third scene of the first act, in which *Othello* addresses the Senate: the only remarkable circumstance being, that as *Iago* could not get on any of the stage-boots, in consequence of his feet being violently swelled with the heat and excitement, he was under the necessity of playing the part in a pair of Wellingtons, which contrasted rather oddly with his richly embroidered pantaloons. When *Othello* started with his address to the Senate (whose dignity was represented by the *Duke*, a carpenter, two men engaged on the recommendation of the gardener, and a boy), Mrs. Porter found the opportunity she so anxiously sought.

Mr. Sempronius proceeded:



"Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters,
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; — rude am I in my speech — "

"Is that right?" whispered Mrs. Porter to Uncle Tom.

"No."

"Tell him so, then."

"I will. Sem!" called out Uncle Tom, "that's wrong, my boy."

"What's wrong, Uncle?" demanded *Othello*, quite forgetting the dignity of his situation.

"You've left out something. 'True I have married — ' "

"Oh, ah!" said Mr. Sempronius, endeavoring to hide his confusion as much and as ineffectually as the audience attempted to conceal their half-suppressed tittering, by coughing with extraordinary violence —

— "'true I have married her; —
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent; no more.'

(*Aside*) Why don't you prompt, father?"

"Because I've mislaid my spectacles," said poor Mr. Gattleton, almost dead with the heat and bustle.

"There, now it's 'rude am I,' " said Uncle Tom.

"Yes, I know it is," returned the unfortunate manager, proceeding with his part.

It would be useless and tiresome to quote the number of instances in which Uncle Tom, now completely in his element, and instigated by the mischievous Mrs. Porter, corrected the mistakes of the performers; suffice it to say, that having mounted his hobby, nothing could induce him to dismount; so, during the whole remainder

of the play, he performed a kind of running accompaniment, by muttering everybody's part as it was being delivered, in an undertone. The audience were highly amused, Mrs. Porter delighted, the performers embarrassed; Uncle Tom never was better pleased in all his life; and Uncle Tom's nephews and nieces had never, although the declared heirs to his large property, so heartily wished him gathered to his fathers as on that memorable occasion.

Several other minor causes, too, united to damp the ardor of the *dramatis personæ*. None of the performers could walk in their tights, or move their arms in their jackets; the pantaloons were too small, the boots too large, and the swords of all shapes and sizes. Mr. Evans, naturally too tall for the scenery, wore a black velvet hat with immense white plumes, the glory of which was lost in "the flies;" and the only other inconvenience of which was, that when it was off his head he could not put it on, and when it was on he could not take it off. Notwithstanding all his practice, too, he fell with his head and shoulders as neatly through one of the side scenes, as a harlequin would jump through a panel in a Christmas pantomime. The pianoforte player, overpowered by the extreme heat of the room, fainted away at the commencement of the entertainments, leaving the music of "Masaniello" to the flute and violoncello. The orchestra complained that Mr. Harleigh put them out, and Mr. Harleigh declared that the orchestra prevented his singing a note. The fishermen, who were hired for the occasion, revolted to the very life, positively refusing to play without an increased allowance of spirits; and, their demand being complied with, getting drunk in the eruption scene as naturally as possible. The red fire,

which was burnt at the conclusion of the second act, not only nearly suffocated the audience, but nearly set the house on fire into the bargain ; and, as it was, the remainder of the piece was acted in a thick fog.

In short, the whole affair was, as Mrs. Joseph Porter triumphantly told everybody, "a complete failure." The audience went home at four o'clock in the morning, exhausted with laughter, suffering from severe headaches, and smelling terribly of brimstone and gunpowder. The Messrs. Gattleton, senior and junior, retired to rest, with the vague idea of emigrating to Swan River early in the ensuing week.

Rose Villa has once again resumed its wonted appearance ; the dining-room furniture has been replaced ; the tables are as nicely polished as formerly ; the horsehair chairs are ranged against the wall, as regularly as ever ; Venetian blinds have been fitted to every window in the house to intercept the prying gaze of Mrs. Joseph Porter. The subject of theatricals is never mentioned in the Gattleton family, unless, indeed, by Uncle Tom, who cannot refrain from sometimes expressing his surprise and regret at finding that his nephews and nieces appear to have lost the relish they once possessed for the beauties of Shakspeare, and quotations from the works of that immortal bard.

CHAPTER X.

A PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF MR. WATKINS TOTILE.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

MATRIMONY is proverbially a serious undertaking. Like an overweening predilection for brandy-and-water, it is a misfortune into which a man easily falls, and from which he finds it remarkably difficult to extricate himself. It is of no use telling a man who is timorous on these points, that it is but one plunge, and all is over. They say the same thing at the Old Bailey, and the unfortunate victims derive as much comfort from the assurance in the one case as in the other.

Mr. Watkins Tottle was a rather uncommon compound of strong uxorious inclinations, and an unparalleled degree of anti-connubial timidity. He was about fifty years of age; stood four feet six inches and three-quarters in his socks — for he never stood in stocking at all — plump, clean, and rosy. He looked something like a vignette to one of Richardson's novels, and had a clean-cravatish formality of manner, and kitchen-pokerness of carriage, which Sir Charles Grandison himself might have envied. He lived on an annuity, which was well adapted to the individual who received it, in one respect — it was rather small. He received it in periodical payments on every alternate Monday; but he ran himself out, about a day after the expiration of the first week, as regularly as an eight-day clock; and then, to make the

comparison complete, his landlady wound him up, and he went on with a regular tick.

Mr. Watkins Tottle had long lived in a state of single blessedness, as bachelors say, or single cursedness, as spinsters think ; but the idea of matrimony had never ceased to haunt him. Wrapt in profound reveries on this never-failing theme, fancy transformed his small parlor in Cecil Street, Strand, into a neat house in the suburbs ; the half-hundredweight of coals under the kitchen-stairs suddenly sprang up into three tons of the best Walls End ; his small French bedstead was converted into a regular matrimonial four-poster ; and in the empty chair on the opposite side of the fireplace, imagination seated a beautiful young lady, with a very little independence or will of her own, and a very large independence under a will of her father's.

"Who's there?" inquired Mr. Watkins Tottle, as a gentle tap at his room-door disturbed these meditations one evening.

"Tottle, my dear fellow, how *do* you do?" said a short elderly gentleman with a gruffish voice, bursting into the room, and replying to the question by asking another.

"Told you I should drop in some evening," said the short gentleman, as he delivered his hat into Tottle's hand, after a little struggling and dodging.

"Delighted to see you, I'm sure," said Mr. Watkins Tottle, wishing internally that his visitor had "dropped in" to the Thames at the bottom of the street, instead of dropping into his parlor. The fortnight was nearly up, and Watkins was hard up.

"How is Mrs. Gabriel Parsons?" inquired Tottle.

"Quite well, thank you," replied Mr. Gabriel Parsons,

for that was the name the short gentleman revelled in. Here there was a pause ; the short gentleman looked at the left hob of the fireplace ; Mr. Watkins Tottle stared vacancy out of countenance.

"Quite well," repeated the short gentleman, when five minutes had expired. "I may say remarkably well." And he rubbed the palms of his hands as hard as if he were going to strike a light by friction.

"What will you take ?" inquired Tottle, with the desperate suddenness of a man who knew that unless the visitor took his leave, he stood very little chance of taking anything else.

"Oh, I don't know. — Have you any whiskey ?"

"Why," replied Tottle, very slowly, for all this was gaining time, "I *had* some capital, and remarkably strong whiskey last week ; but it's all gone — and therefore its strength —"

"Is much beyond proof ; or, in other words, impossible to be proved," said the short gentleman ; and he laughed very heartily, and seemed quite glad the whiskey had been drunk. Mr. Tottle smiled — but it was the smile of despair. When Mr. Gabriel Parsons had done laughing, he delicately insinuated that, in the absence of whiskey, he would not be averse to brandy. And Mr. Watkins Tottle, lighting a flat candle very ostentatiously ; and displaying an immense key, which belonged to the street-door, but which, for the sake of appearances, occasionally did duty in an imaginary wine-cellar ; left the room to entreat his landlady to charge their glasses, and charge them in the bill. The application was successful ; the spirits were speedily called — not from the vasty deep, but the adjacent wine-vaults. The two short gentlemen mixed their grog ; and then sat *cosily*

down before the fire — a pair of shorts, airing themselves.

“Tottle,” said Mr. Gabriel Parsons, “you know my way — off-hand, open, say what I mean, mean what I say, hate reserve, and can’t bear affectation. One, is a bad domino which only hides what good people have about ’em, without making the bad look better; and the other is much about the same thing as pinking a white cotton stocking to make it look like a silk one. Now listen to what I’m going to say.”

Here, the little gentleman paused, and took a long pull at his brandy-and-water. Mr. Watkins Tottle took a sip of his, stirred the fire, and assumed an air of profound attention.

“It’s of no use humming and ha’ing about the matter,” resumed the short gentleman, — “you want to get married.”

“Why,” replied Mr. Watkins Tottle, evasively; for he trembled violently, and felt a sudden tingling throughout his whole frame; “why — I should certainly — at least, I *think* I should like —”

“Won’t do,” said the short gentleman. — “Plain and free — or there’s an end of the matter. Do you want money?”

“You know I do.”

“You admire the sex?”

“I do.”

“And you’d like to be married?”

“Certainly.”

“Then you shall be. There’s an end of that.” Thus saying, Mr. Gabriel Parsons took a pinch of snuff, and **mixed** another glass.

“Let me entreat you to be more explanatory,” said

Tottle. "Really, as the party principally interested, I cannot consent to be disposed of, in this way."

"I'll tell you, replied Mr. Gabriel Parsons, warming with the subject, and the brandy-and-water. — "I know a lady — she's stopping with my wife now — who's just the thing for you. Well-educated; talks French; plays the piano; knows a good deal about flowers and shells, and all that sort of thing; and has five hundred a year, with an uncontrollable power of disposing of it, by her last will and testament."

"I'll pay my addresses to her," said Mr. Watkins Tottle. "She isn't *very* young — is she?"

"Not very; just the thing for you. — I've said that already."

"What colored hair has the lady?" inquired Mr. Watkins Tottle.

"Egad, I hardly recollect," replied Gabriel with coolness. "Perhaps I ought to have observed, at first, she wears a front."

"A what!" ejaculated Tottle.

"One of those thing, with curls, along here," said Parsons, drawing a straight line across his forehead, just over his eyes, in illustration of his meaning. "I know the front's black: I can't speak quite positively about her own hair; because, unless one walks behind her, and catches a glimpse of it under her bonnet, one seldom sees it; but I should say that it was *rather* lighter than the front — a shade of a grayish tinge, perhaps."

Mr. Watkins Tottle looked as if he had certain misgivings of mind. Mr. Gabriel Parsons perceived it, and thought it would be safe to begin the next attack without delay.

"Now, were you ever in love, Tottle?" he inquired.

Mr. Watkins Tottle blushed up to the eyes, and down to the chin, and exhibited a most extensive combination of colors as he confessed the soft impeachment.

"I suppose you popped the question, more than once, when you were a young — I beg your pardon — a younger — man," said Parsons.

"Never in my life!" replied his friend, apparently indignant at being suspected of such an act. "Never! The fact is, that I entertain, as you know, peculiar opinions on these subjects. I am not afraid of ladies, young or old — far from it; but, I think, that in compliance with the custom of the present day, they allow too much freedom of speech and manner to marriageable men. Now, the fact is, that anything like this easy freedom I never could acquire; and as I am always afraid of going too far, I am generally, I dare say, considered formal and cold."

"I shouldn't wonder if you were," replied Parsons, gravely; "I shouldn't wonder. However you'll be all right in this case; for the strictness and delicacy of this lady's ideas greatly exceed your own. Lord bless you, why when she came to our house, there was an old portrait of some man or other, with two large black staring eyes, hanging up in her bedroom; she positively refused to go to bed there, till it was taken down, considering it decidedly wrong."

"I think so, too," said Mr. Watkins Tottle; "certainly."

"And then, the other night — I never laughed so much in my life," resumed Mr. Gabriel Parsons; "I had driven home in an easterly wind, and caught a devil of a face-ache. Well; as Fanny — that's Mrs. Parsons, you know — and this friend of hers, and I, and Frank

Ross, were playing a rubber, I said, jokingly, that when I went to bed I should wrap my head in Fanny's flannel petticoat. She instantly threw up her cards, and left the room."

"Quite right!" said Mr. Watkins Tottle, "she could not possibly have behaved in a more dignified manner. What did you do?"

"Do? — Frank took dummy; and I won sixpence?"

"But, didn't you apologize for hurting her feelings?"

"Devil a bit. Next morning at breakfast, we talked it over. She contended that any reference to a flannel petticoat was improper; — men ought not to be supposed to know that such things were. I pleaded my coverture; being a married man."

"And what did the lady say to that?" inquired Tottle, deeply interested.

"Changed her ground, and said that Frank being a single man, its impropriety was obvious."

"Noble-minded creature!" exclaimed the enraptured Tottle.

"Oh! both Fanny and I said, at once, that she was regularly cut out for you."

A gleam of placid satisfaction shone on the circular face of Mr. Watkins Tottle, as he heard the prophecy.

"There's one thing I can't understand," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons, as he rose to depart; "I cannot, for the life and soul of me imagine, how the deuce you'll ever contrive to come together. The lady would certainly go into convulsions if the subject were mentioned." Mr. Gabriel Parsons sat down again, and laughed until he was weak. Tottle owed him money, so he had a perfect right to laugh at Tottle's expense.

Mr. Watkins Tottle feared, in his own mind, that **this**

was another characteristic which he had in common with this modern Lucretia. He, however, accepted the invitation to dine with the Parsonses on the next day but one, with great firmness; and looked forward to the introduction, when again left alone, with tolerable composure.

The sun that rose on the next day but one, had never beheld a sprucer personage on the outside of the Norwood stage, than Mr. Watkins Tottle; and when the coach drew up before a card-board looking house with disguised chimneys, and a lawn like a large sheet of green letter-paper, he certainly had never lighted to his place of destination a gentleman who felt more uncomfortable.

The coach stopped, and Mr. Watkins Tottle jumped — we beg his pardon — alighted, with great dignity. “All right!” said he, and away went the coach up the hill with that beautiful equanimity of pace for which “short” stages are generally remarkable.

Mr. Watkins Tottle gave a faltering jerk to the handle of the garden-gate bell. He essayed a more energetic tug, and his previous nervousness was not at all diminished by hearing the bell ringing like a fire alarm.

“Is Mr. Parsons at home?” inquired Tottle of the man who opened the gate. He could hardly hear himself speak, for the bell had not yet done tolling.

“Here I am,” shouted a voice on the lawn, — and there was Mr. Gabriel Parsons in a flannel jacket, running backwards and forwards, from a wicket to two hats piled on each other, and from the two hats to the wicket, in the most violent manner, while another gentleman with his coat off was getting down the area of the house, after a ball. When the gentleman without the coat had

found it — which he did in less than ten minutes — he ran back to the hats, and Gabriel Parsons pulled up. Then, the gentleman without the coat called out “play,” very loudly, and bowled. Then, Mr. Gabriel Parsons knocked the ball several yards, and took another run. Then, the other gentleman aimed at the wicket, and didn’t hit it; and Mr. Gabriel Parsons, having finished running on his own account, laid down the bat and ran after the ball, which went into a neighboring field. They called this cricket.

“Tottle, will you ‘go in?’” inquired Mr. Gabriel Parsons, as he approached him, wiping the perspiration off his face.

Mr. Watkins Tottle declined the offer, the bare idea of accepting which made him even warmer than his friend.

“Then we’ll go into the house, as it’s past four, and I shall have to wash my hands before dinner,” said Mr. Gabriel Parsons. “Here, I hate ceremony, you know! Timson, that’s Tottle — Tottle, that’s Timson; bred for the church, which I fear will never be bread for him;” and he chuckled at the old joke. Mr. Timson bowed carelessly. Mr. Watkins Tottle bowed stiffly. Mr. Gabriel Parsons led the way to the house. He was a rich sugar-baker, who mistook rudeness for honesty, and abrupt bluntness for an open and candid manner; many besides Gabriel mistake bluntness for sincerity.

Mrs. Gabriel Parsons received the visitors most graciously on the steps, and preceded them to the drawing-room. On the sofa was seated a lady of very prim appearance, and remarkably inanimate. She was one of those persons at whose age it is impossible to make

any reasonable guess ; her features might have been remarkably pretty when she was younger, and they might always have presented the same appearance. Her complexion — with a slight trace of powder here and there — was as clear as that of a well-made wax doll, and her face as expressive. She was handsomely dressed, and was winding up a gold watch.

“ Miss Lillerton, my dear, this is our friend Mr. Watkins Tottle ; a very old acquaintance, I assure you,” said Mrs. Parsons, presenting the Strephon of Cecil Street, Strand. The lady rose, and made a deep courtesy ; Mr. Watkins Tottle made a bow.

“ Splendid, majestic creature ! ” thought Tottle.

Mr. Timson advanced, and Mr. Watkins Tottle began to hate him. Men generally discover a rival, instinctively, and Mr. Watkins Tottle felt that his hate was deserved.

“ May I beg,” said the reverend gentleman, — “ May I beg to call upon you, Miss Lillerton, for some trifling donation to my soup, coals, and blanket-distribution society ? ”

“ Put my name down for two sovereigns, if you please,” responded Miss Lillerton.

“ You are truly charitable, madam,” said the Reverend Mr. Timson, “ and we know that charity will cover a multitude of sins. Let me beg you to understand that I do not say this from the supposition that you have many sins which require palliation ; believe me when I say that I never yet met any one who had fewer to atone for than Miss Lillerton.”

Something like a bad imitation of animation lighted up the lady’s face, as she acknowledged the compliment. Watkins Tottle incurred the sin of wishing that the

ashes of the Reverend Charles Timson were quietly deposited in the churchyard of his curacy, wherever it might be.

"I'll tell you what," interrupted Parsons, who had just appeared with clean hands, and a black coat, "it's my private opinion, Timson, that your 'distribution society' is rather a humbug."

"You are so severe," replied Timson, with a Christian smile; he disliked Parsons, but liked his dinners.

"So positively unjust!" said Miss Lillerton.

"Certainly," observed Tottle. The lady looked up; her eyes met those of Mr. Watkins Tottle. She withdrew them in a sweet confusion, and Watkins Tottle did the same — the confusion was mutual.

"Why," urged Mr. Parsons, pursuing his objections, "what on earth is the use of giving a man coals who has nothing to cook, or giving him blankets when he hasn't a bed, or giving him soup when he requires substantial food? — 'like sending them ruffles when wanting a shirt.' Why not give 'em a trifle of money, as I do, when I think they deserve it, and let them purchase what they think best? Why? — because your subscribers wouldn't see their names flourishing in print on the church-door — that's the reason."

"Really, Mr. Parsons, I hope you don't mean to insinuate that I wish to see *my* name in print, on the church-door," interrupted Miss Lillerton.

"I hope not," said Mr. Watkins Tottle, putting in another word, and getting another glance.

"Certainly not," replied Parsons. "I dare say you wouldn't mind seeing it in writing, though, in the church register — eh?"

"Register! What register?" inquired the lady, gravely.

“Why, the register of marriages, to be sure,” replied Parsons, chuckling at the sally, and glancing at Tottle. Mr. Watkins Tottle thought he should have fainted for shame, and it is quite impossible to imagine what effect the joke would have had upon the lady, if dinner had not been, at that moment, announced. Mr. Watkins Tottle, with an unprecedented effort of gallantry, offered the tip of his little finger; Miss Lillerton accepted it gracefully, with maiden modesty; and they proceeded in due state to the dinner-table, where they were soon deposited side by side. The room was very snug, the dinner very good, and the little party in spirits. The conversation became pretty general, and when Mr. Watkins Tottle had extracted one or two cold observations from his neighbor, and had taken wine with her, he began to acquire confidence rapidly. The cloth was removed; Mrs. Gabriel Parsons drank four glasses of port on the plea of being a nurse just then; and Miss Lillerton took about the same number of sips, on the plea of not wanting any at all. At length the ladies retired, to the great gratification of Mr. Gabriel Parsons, who had been coughing and frowning at his wife for half an hour previously — signals which Mrs. Parsons never happened to observe, until she had been pressed to take her ordinary quantum, which, to avoid giving trouble, she generally did at once.

“What do you think of her?” inquired Mr. Gabriel Parsons of Mr. Watkins Tottle, in an undertone.

“I dote on her with enthusiasm already!” replied Mr. Watkins Tottle.

“Gentlemen, pray let us drink ‘the ladies,’” said the Reverend Mr. Timson.

“The ladies!” said Mr. Watkins Tottle, emptying his

glass. In the fulness of his confidence, he felt as if he could make love to a dozen ladies, off-hand.

"Ah!" said Mr. Gabriel Parsons, "I remember when I was a young man — fill your glass, Timson."

"I have this moment emptied it."

"Then fill again."

"I will," said Timson, suiting the action to the word.

"I remember," resumed Mr. Gabriel Parsons, "when I was a younger man, with what a strange compound of feelings I used to drink that toast, and how I used to think every woman was an angel."

"Was that before you were married?" mildly inquired Mr. Watkins Tottle.

"Oh! certainly," replied Mr. Gabriel Parsons, "I have never thought so since; and a precious milksop I must have been, ever to have thought so at all. But, you know, I married Fanny under the oddest and most ridiculous circumstances possible."

"What were they, if one may inquire?" asked Timson, who had heard the story, on an average, twice a week for the last six months. Mr. Watkins Tottle listened attentively, in the hope of picking up some suggestion that might be useful to him in his new undertaking.

"I spent my wedding-night in a back-kitchen chimney," said Parsons, by way of a beginning.

"In a back-kitchen chimney!" ejaculated Watkins Tottle. "How dreadful!"

"Yes, it wasn't very pleasant," replied the small host.

The fact is, Fanny's father and mother liked me well enough as an individual, but had a decided objection to my becoming a husband. You see, I hadn't any money in those days, and they had; and so they wanted Fanny

to pick up somebody else. However, we managed to discover the state of each other's affections somehow. I used to meet her, at some mutual friends' parties ; at first we danced together, and talked, and flirted, and all that sort of thing ; then, I used to like nothing so well as sitting by her side — we didn't talk so much then, but I remember I used to have a great notion of looking at her out of the extreme corner of my left eye — and then I got very miserable and sentimental, and began to write verses, and use Macassar oil. At last I couldn't bear it any longer, and after I had walked up and down the sunny side of Oxford Street in tight boots for a week — and a devilish hot summer it was too — in the hope of meeting her, I sat down and wrote a letter, and begged her to manage to see me clandestinely, for I wanted to hear her decision from her own mouth. I said I had discovered, to my perfect satisfaction, that I couldn't live without her, and that if she didn't have me, I had made up my mind to take prussic acid, or take to drinking, or emigrate, so as to take myself off in some way or other. Well, I borrowed a pound, and bribed the housemaid to give her the note, which she did."

"And what was the reply?" inquired Timson, who had found, before, that to encourage the repetition of old stories is to get a general invitation.

"Oh, the usual one! Fanny expressed herself very miserable; hinted at the possibility of an early grave; said that nothing should induce her to swerve from the duty she owed her parents; implored me to forget her, and find out somebody more deserving, and all that sort of thing. She said she could, on no account, think of meeting me unknown to her pa and ma; and entreated me, as she should be in a particular part of Kensington

Gardens at eleven o'clock next morning, not to attempt to meet her there."

"You didn't go, of course?" said Watkins Tottle.

"Didn't I? — Of course I did. There she was, with the identical housemaid in perspective, in order that there might be no interruption. We walked about, for a couple of hours; made ourselves delightfully miserable; and were regularly engaged. Then, we began to 'correspond' — that is to say, we used to exchange about four letters a day; what we used to say in 'em I can't imagine. And I used to have an interview, in the kitchen, or the cellar, or some such place, every evening. Well, things went on in this way for some time; and we got fonder of each other every day. At last, as our love was raised to such a pitch, and as my salary had been raised too, shortly before, we determined on a secret marriage. Fanny arranged to sleep at a friend's on the previous night; we were to be married early in the morning; and then we were to return to her home and be pathetic. She was to fall at the old gentleman's feet, and bathe his boots with her tears; and I was to hug the old lady and call her 'mother,' and use my pocket-handkerchief as much as possible. Married we were, the next morning; two girls — friends of Fanny's — acting as bridesmaids; and a man, who was hired for five shillings and a pint of porter, officiating as father. Now, the old lady unfortunately put off her return from Ramsgate, where she had been paying a visit, until the next morning: and as we placed great reliance on her, we agreed to postpone our confession for four-and-twenty hours. My newly made wife returned home, and I spent my wedding-day in strolling about Hampstead Heath, and execrating my father-in-law. Of course, I went to



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comfort my dear little wife at night, as much as I could, with the assurance that our troubles would soon be over. I opened the garden-gate, of which I had a key, and was shown by the servant to our old place of meeting — a back-kitchen, with a stone floor and a dresser; upon which, in the absence of chairs, we used to sit and make love."

"Make love upon a kitchen-dresser?" interrupted Mr. Watkins Tottle, whose ideas of decorum were greatly outraged.

"Ah! On a kitchen-dresser!" replied Parsons. "And let me tell you, old fellow, that, if you were really over head-and-ears in love, and had no other place to make love in, you'd be devilish glad to avail yourself of such an opportunity. However, let me see; — where was I?"

"On the dresser," suggested Timson.

"Oh — ah! Well, here I found poor Fanny, quite disconsolate and uncomfortable. The old boy had been very cross all day, which made her feel still more lonely; and she was quite out of spirits. So, I put a good face on the matter, and laughed it off, and said we should enjoy the pleasures of a matrimonial life more, by contrast; and, at length, poor Fanny brightened up a little. I stopped there, till about eleven o'clock, and, just as I was taking my leave for the fourteenth time, the girl came running down the stairs, without her shoes, in a great fright, to tell us that the old villain — Heaven forgive me for calling him so, for he is dead and gone now! — prompted I suppose by the prince of darkness, was coming down to draw his own beer for supper — a thing we had not done before, for six months, to my certain knowledge; for the cask stood in that very back-kitchen.

If he discovered me there, explanation would have been out of the question ; for he was so outrageously violent, when at all excited, that he never would have listened to me. There was only one thing to be done. The chimney was a very wide one ; it had been originally built for an oven ; went up perpendicularly for a few feet, and then shot backward and formed a sort of small cavern. My hopes and fortune — the means of our joint existence almost — were at stake. I scrambled in, like a squirrel ; coiled myself up in this recess ; and, as Fanny and the girl replaced the deal chimney board, I could see the light of the candle which my unconscious father-in-law carried in his hand. I heard him draw the beer ; and I never heard beer run so slowly. He was just leaving the kitchen, and I was preparing to descend, when down came the infernal chimney board with a tremendous crash. He stopped, and put down the candle and the jug of beer on the dresser ; he was a nervous old fellow, and any unexpected noise annoyed him. He coolly observed that the fireplace was never used, and sending the frightened servant into the next kitchen for a hammer and nails, actually nailed up the board, and locked the door on the outside. So, there was I, on my wedding-night, in the light kerseymere trousers, fancy waistcoat, and blue coat, that I had been married in in the morning, in a back-kitchen chimney, the bottom of which was nailed up, and the top of which had been formerly raised some fifteen feet, to prevent the smoke from annoying the neighbors. And there," added Mr. Gabriel Parsons, as he passed the bottle, "there I remained till half-past seven the next morning, when the housemaid's sweetheart, who was a carpenter, unshelled me. The old dog had nailed me up so securely, that, to this very hour, I

firmly believe that no one but a carpenter could ever have got me out."

"And what did Mrs. Parsons's father say, when he found you were married?" inquired Watkins Tottle, who, although he never saw a joke, was not satisfied until he heard a story to the very end.

"Why, the affair of the chimney so tickled his fancy, that he pardoned us off-hand, and allowed us something to live on till he went the way of all flesh. I spent the next night in his second-floor front, much more comfortably than I had spent the preceding one; for, as you will probably guess —"

"Please sir, missis has made tea," said a middle-aged female servant, bobbing into the room.

"That's the very housemaid that figures in my story," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons. "She went into Fanny's service when we were first married, and has been with us ever since; but I don't think she has felt one atom of respect for me since the morning she saw me released, when she went into violent hysterics, to which she has been subject ever since. Now, shall we join the ladies?"

"If you please," said Mr. Watkins Tottle.

"By all means," added the obsequious Mr. Timson; and the trio made for the drawing-room accordingly.

Tea being concluded, and the toast and cups having been duly handed, and occasionally upset, by Mr. Watkins Tottle, a rubber was proposed. They cut for partners — Mr. and Mrs. Parsons; and Mr. Watkins Tottle and Miss Lillerton. Mr. Timson having conscientious scruples on the subject of card-playing, drank brandy-and-water, and kept up a running spar with Mr. Watkins Tottle. The evening went off well; Mr. Watkins Tottle

was in high spirits, having some reason to be gratified with his reception by Miss Lillerton; and before he left, a small party was made up to visit the Beulah Spa on the following Saturday.

"It's all right, I think," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons to Mr. Watkins Tottle, as he opened the garden gate for him.

"I hope so," he replied, squeezing his friend's hand.

"You'll be down by the first coach on Saturday," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Watkins Tottle. "Undoubtedly."

But fortune had decreed that Mr. Watkins Tottle should not be down by the first coach on Saturday. His adventures on that day, however, and the success of his wooing, are subjects for another chapter.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

"THE first coach has not come in yet, has it, Tom?" inquired Mr. Gabriel Parsons, as he very complacently paced up and down the fourteen feet of gravel which bordered the "lawn," on the Saturday morning which had been fixed upon for the Beulah Spa jaunt.

"No, sir; I haven't seen it," replied a gardener in a blue apron, who let himself out to do the ornamental for half a crown a day and his "keep."

"Time Tottle was down," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons, ruminating — "Oh, here he is, no doubt," added Gabriel, as a cab drove rapidly up the hill; and he buttoned his

dress-gown, and opened the gate to receive the expected visitor. The cab stopped, and out jumped a man in a coarse Petersham great-coat, whity-brown neckerchief, faded black suit, gamboge-colored top-boots, and one of those large-crowned hats formerly seldom met with, but now very generally patronized by gentlemen and costermongers.

"Mr. Parsons?" said the man, looking at the superscription of a note he held in his hand, and addressing Gabriel with an inquiring air.

"My name is Parsons," responded the sugar-baker.

"I've brought this here note," replied the individual in the painted tops, in a hoarse whisper; "I've brought this here note from a gen'lm'n as come to our house this mornin'."

"I expected the gentleman at my house," said Parsons, as he broke the seal, which bore the impression of her majesty's profile as it is seen on a sixpence.

"I've no doubt the gen'lm'n would ha' been here," replied the stranger, "if he hadn't happened to call at our house first; but we never trusts no gen'lm'n further nor we can see him — no mistake about that there" — added the unknown, with a facetious grin; "beg yer pardon, sir, no offence meant, only — once in, and I wish you may — catch the idea, sir?"

Mr. Gabriel Parsons was not remarkable for catching anything suddenly, but a cold. He therefore only bestowed a glance of profound astonishment on his mysterious companion, and proceeded to unfold the note of which he had been the bearer. Once opened, and the idea was caught with very little difficulty. Mr. Watkins Tottle had been suddenly arrested for 33*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.*, and

dated his communication from a lock-up house in the vicinity of Chancery Lane.

"Unfortunate affair, this!" said Parsons, refolding the note.

"Oh! nothin' ven you're used to it," coolly observed the man in the Petersham.

"Tom!" exclaimed Parsons, after a few minutes' consideration, "just put the horse in, will you? — Tell the gentleman that I shall be there almost as soon as you are," he continued, addressing the sheriff-officer's Mercury.

"Werry well," replied that important functionary; adding, in a confidential manner, "I'd advise the gen'lm'n's friends to settle. You see it's a mere trifle; and, unless the gen'lm'n means to go up afore the court, it's hardly worth while waiting for detainers, you know. Our governor's wide awake, he is. I'll never say nothin' agin him, nor no man; but he knows what's o'clock, he does, uncommon." Having delivered this eloquent, and, to Parsons, particularly intelligible harangue, the meaning of which was eked out by divers nods and winks, the gentleman in the boots reseated himself in the cab, which went rapidly off and was soon out of sight. Mr. Gabriel Parsons continued to pace up and down the pathway for some minutes, apparently absorbed in deep meditation. The result of his cogitations seemed to be perfectly satisfactory to himself, for he ran briskly into the house; said that business had suddenly summoned him to town; that he had desired the messenger to inform Mr. Watkins Tottle of the fact; and that they would return together to dinner. He then hastily equipped himself for a drive, and mounting his gig, was soon on his way to the establishment of Mr. Solomon

Jacobs, situate (as Mr. Watkins Tottle had informed him) in Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane.

When a man is in a violent hurry to get on, and has a specific object in view, the attainment of which depends on the completion of his journey, the difficulties which interpose themselves in his way appear not only to be innumerable, but to have been called into existence especially for the occasion. The remark is by no means a new one, and Mr. Gabriel Parsons had practical and painful experience of its justice in the course of his drive. There are three classes of animated objects which prevent your driving with any degree of comfort or celerity through streets which are but little frequented—they are pigs, children, and old women. On the occasion we are describing, the pigs were luxuriating on cabbage-stalks; and the shuttlecocks fluttered from the little deal battledoors, and the children played in the road; and women, with a basket in one hand and the street-door key in the other, *would* cross just before the horse's head, until Mr. Gabriel Parsons was perfectly savage with vexation, and quite hoarse with hoi-ing and imprecating. Then, when he got into Fleet Street, there was "a stoppage," in which people in vehicles have the satisfaction of remaining stationary for half an hour, and envying the slowest pedestrians; and where policemen rush about, and seize hold of horses' bridles, and back them into shop-windows, by way of clearing the road and preventing confusion. At length Mr. Gabriel Parsons turned into Chancery Lane, and having inquired for, and been directed to Cursitor Street (for it was a locality of which he was quite ignorant), he soon found himself opposite the house of Mr. Solomon Jacobs. Confiding his horse and gig to the care

of one of the fourteen boys who had followed him from the other side of Blackfriars Bridge on the chance of his requiring their services, Mr. Gabriel Parsons crossed the road and knocked at an inner door, the upper part of which was of glass, grated like the windows of this inviting mansion with iron bars — painted white to look comfortable.

The knock was answered by a sallow-faced red-haired sulky boy, who, after surveying Mr. Gabriel Parsons through the glass, applied a large key to an immense wooden excrescence, which was in reality a lock, but which, taken in conjunction with the iron nails with which the panels were studded, gave the door the appearance of being subject to warts.

“I want to see Mr. Watkins Tottle,” said Parsons.

“It’s the gentleman that come in this morning, Jem,” screamed a voice from the top of the kitchen stairs, which belonged to a dirty woman, who had just brought her chin to a level with the passage-floor. “The gentleman’s in the coffee-room.”

“Up-stairs, sir,” said the boy, just opening the door wide enough to let Parsons in without squeezing him, and double-locking it the moment he had made his way through the aperture — “First floor — door on the left.”

Mr. Gabriel Parsons, thus instructed, ascended the uncarpeted and ill-lighted staircase, and after giving several subdued taps at the before-mentioned “door on the left,” which were rendered inaudible by the hum of voices within the room, and the hissing noise attendant on some frying operations which were carrying on below stairs, turned the handle, and entered the apartment. Being informed that the unfortunate object of his visit



Gary Crutshank

had just gone up-stairs to write a letter, he had leisure to sit down and observe the scene before him.

The room — which was a small, confined den — was partitioned off into boxes, like the common room of some inferior eating-house. The dirty floor had evidently been as long a stranger to the scrubbing-brush as to carpet or floor-cloth; and the ceiling was completely blackened by the flare of the oil-lamp by which the room was lighted at night. The gray ashes on the edges of the tables, and the cigar ends which were plentifully scattered about the dusty grate, fully accounted for the intolerable smell of tobacco which pervaded the place; and the empty glasses and half-saturated slices of lemon on the tables, together with the porter-pots beneath them, bore testimony to the frequent libations in which the individuals who honored Mr. Solomon Jacobs by a temporary residence in his house indulged. Over the mantel-shelf was a paltry looking-glass, extending about half the width of the chimney piece; but by way of counterpoise the ashes were confined by a rusty fender about twice as long as the hearth.

From this cheerful room itself, the attention of Mr. Gabriel Parsons was naturally directed to its inmates. In one of the boxes two men were playing at cribbage with a very dirty pack of cards, some with blue, some with green, and some with red backs — selections from decayed packs. The cribbage board had been long ago formed on the table by some ingenious visitor with the assistance of a pocket-knife and a two-pronged fork, with which the necessary number of holes had been made in the table at proper distances for the reception of the wooden pegs. In another box a stout, hearty looking man, of about forty, was eating some dinner which his

wife — an equally comfortable-looking personage — **had** brought him in a basket ! and in a third, a genteel-looking young man was talking earnestly, and in a low tone, to a young female, whose face was concealed by a thick veil, but whom Mr. Gabriel Parsons immediately set down in his own mind as the debtor's wife. A young fellow of vulgar manners, dressed in the very extreme of the prevailing fashion, was pacing up and down the room, with a lighted cigar in his mouth, and his hands in his pockets, ever and anon puffing forth volumes of smoke, and occasionally applying, with much apparent relish, to a pint pot, the contents of which were "chilling" on the hob.

"Fourpence more, by gum !" exclaimed one of the cribbage-players, lighting a pipe, and addressing his adversary at the close of the game ; "one 'ud think you'd got luck in a pepper-cruet, and shook it out when you wanted it."

"Well, that a'n't a bad un," replied the other, who was a horse-dealer from Islington.

"No ; I'm blessed if it is," interposed the jolly looking fellow, who, having finished his dinner, was drinking out of the same glass as his wife, in truly conjugal harmony, some hot gin-and-water. The faithful partner of his cares had brought a plentiful supply of the anti-temperance fluid in a large flat stone bottle, which looked like a half-gallon jar that had been successfully tapped for the dropsy. "You're a rum chap, you are, Mr. Walker — will you dip your beak into this, sir ?"

"Thank'ee, sir," replied Mr. Walker, leaving his box, and advancing to the other to accept the proffered glass. "Here's your health, sir, and your good 'ooman's here. Gentlemen all — yours, and better luck still. Well, Mr.

Willis," continued the facetious prisoner, addressing the young man with the cigar, "you seem rather down to-day — floored, as one may say. What's the matter, sir? Never say die you know."

"Oh! I'm all right," replied the smoker. "I shall be bailed out to-morrow."

"Shall you, though?" inquired the other. "Damme, I wish I could say the same. I am as regularly over head and ears as the Royal George, and stand about as much chance of being *bailed out*. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Why," said the young man, stopping short, and speaking in a very loud key, "look at me. What d'ye think I've stopped here two days for?"

"'Cause you couldn't get out, I suppose," interrupted Mr. Walker, winking to the company. "Not that you're exactly obliged to stop here, only you can't help it. No compulsion, you know, only you must — eh?"

"A'n't he a rum un," inquired the delighted individual, who had offered the gin-and-water, of his wife.

"Oh, he just is!" replied the lady, who was quite overcome by these flashes of imagination.

"Why, my case," frowned the victim, throwing the end of his cigar into the fire, and illustrating his argument by knocking the bottom of the pot on the table, at intervals, — "my case is a very singular one. My father's a man of large property, and I am his son."

"That's a very strange circumstance!" interrupted the jocose Mr. Walker, *en passant*.

"— I am his son, and have received a liberal education. I don't owe no man nothing — not the value of a farthing, but I was induced, you see, to put my name to some bills for a friend — bills to a large amount, I may

say a very large amount, for which I didn't receive no consideration. What's the consequence?"

"Why, I suppose the bills went out, and you came in. The acceptances weren't taken up, and you were, eh?" inquired Walker.

"To be sure," replied the liberally educated young gentleman. "To be sure; and so here I am, locked up for a matter of twelve hundred pound."

"Why don't you ask your old governor to stump up?" inquired Walker, with a somewhat sceptical air.

"Oh! bless you, he'd never do it," replied the other, in a tone of expostulation — "Never!"

"Well, it is very odd to — be — sure," interposed the owner of the flat bottle, mixing another glass, "but I've been in difficulties, as one may say, now for thirty year. I went to pieces when I was in a milk-walk, thirty year ago; arterwards, when I was a fruiterer, and kept a spring wan; and arter that again in the coal and 'tatur line — but all that time I never see a youngish chap come into a place of this kind, who wasn't going out again directly, and who hadn't been arrested on bills which he'd given a friend and for which he'd received nothing whatsomever — not a fraction."

"Oh! it's always the cry," said Walker. "I can't see the use on it; that's what makes me so wild. Why, I should have a much better opinion of an individual, if he'd say at once in an honorable and gentlemanly manner as he'd done everybody he possibly could."

"Ay, to be sure," interposed the horse-dealer, with whose notions of bargain and sale the axiom perfectly coincided, "so should I."

The young gentleman, who had given rise to these observations, was on the point of offering a rather angry

reply to these sneers, but the rising of the young man before noticed, and of the female who had been sitting by him, to leave the room, interrupted the conversation. She had been weeping bitterly, and the noxious atmosphere of the room acting upon her excited feelings and delicate frame, rendered the support of her companion necessary as they quitted it together.

There was an air of superiority about them both, and something in their appearance so unusual in such a place, that a respectful silence was observed until the *whirr* — *r* — *bang* of the spring door announced that they were out of hearing. It was broken by the wife of the ex-fruiterer.

“Poor creetur!” said she, quenching a sigh in a rivulet of gin-and-water. “She’s very young.”

“She’s a nice-looking ’ooman too,” added the horse-dealer.

“What’s he in for, Ikey?” inquired Walker, of an individual who was spreading a cloth with numerous blotches of mustard upon it, on one of the tables, and whom Mr. Gabriel Parsons had no difficulty in recognizing as the man who had called upon him in the morning.

“Vy,” responded the factotum, “it’s one of the rummiest rigs you ever heard on. He come in here last Vensday, which by the by he’s agoing over the water to-night — hows’ever that’s neither here nor there. You see I’ve been agoing back’ards and for’ards about his business, and ha’ managed to pick up some of his story from the servants and them; and so far as I can make it out, it seems to be summat to this here effect —”

“Cut it short, old fellow,” interrupted Walker, who knew from former experience that he of the top-

boots was neither very concise nor intelligible in his narratives.

“Let me alone,” replied Ikey, “and I’ll ha’ vound up, and made my lucky in five seconds. This here young gen’lm’n’s father so I’m told, mind ye — and the father o’ the young voman, have always been on very bad, out-and-out, rig’lar knock-me-down sort o’ terms; but somehow or another, when he was a-wisit’in’ at some gentlefolk’s house, as he knowed at college, he came into contract with the young lady. He seed her several times, and then he up and said he’d keep company with her, if so be as she vos agreeable. Vell, she vos as sweet upon him as he vos upon her, and so I s’pose they made it all right; for they got married ’bout six months arterwards, unbeknown, mind ye, to the two fathers — leastways so I’m told. When they heard on it — my eyes, there was such a combustion! Starvation vos the very least that vos to be done to ’em. The young gen’lm’n’s father cut him off vith a bob, ’cos he’d cut himself off vith a wife; and the young lady’s father he behaved even worsor and more unnat’ral, for he not only blow’d her up dreadful, and swore he’d never see her again, but he employed a chap as I knows — and as you knows, Mr. Valker, a precious sight too well — to go about and buy up the bills and them things on which the young husband, thinking his governor ’ud come round agin, had raised the vind just to blow himself on vith for a time; besides vich, he made all the interest he could to set other people agin him. Consequence vos, that he paid as long as he could; but things he never expected to have to meet till he’d had time to turn himself round, come fast upon him, and he vos nabbed. He vos brought here, as I said afore, last Vensday, and I think there’s about — ah,

half a dozen detainers agin him down-stairs now. I have been," added Ikey, "in the purfession these fifteen year, and I never met with such windictiveness afore!"

"Poor creeturs!" exclaimed the coal-dealer's wife once more: again resorting to the same excellent prescription for nipping a sigh in the bud: "Ah! when they've seen as much trouble as I and my old man here have, they'll be as comfortable under it as we are."

"The young lady's a pretty creature," said Walker, "only she's a little too delicate for my taste — there a'n't enough of her. As to the young cove, he may be very respectable and what not, but he's too down in the mouth for me — he a'n't game."

"Game!" exclaimed Ikey, who had been altering the position of a green-handled knife and fork at least a dozen times, in order that he might remain in the room under the pretext of having something to do. "He's game enough ven there's anything to be fierce about; but who could be game as you call it, Mr. Walker, with a pale young creetur like that, hanging about him? — It's enough to drive any man's heart into his boots to see 'em together — and no mistake at all about it. I never shall forget her first comin' here; he wrote to her on the Thursday to come — I know he did, 'cos I took the letter. Uncommon fidgety he was all day to be sure, and in the evening he goes down into the office, and he says to Jacobs, says he, 'Sir, can I have the loan of a private room for a few minutes this evening, without incurring any additional expense — just to see my wife in?' says he. Jacobs looked as much as to say — 'Strike me bountiful if you a'n't one of the modest sort!' but as he gen'lm'n who had been in the back parlor had just gone out, and had paid for it for that day, he says —

werry grave — ‘Sir,’ says he, it’s agin our rules to let private rooms to our lodgers on gratis terms, but, says he, ‘for a gentleman, I don’t mind breaking through them for once.’ So then he turns round to me, and says, ‘Ikey, put two mould candles in the back-parlor, and charge ’em to this gen’lm’n’s account,’ vich I did. Vell, by and by a hackney-coach comes up to the door, and there, sure enough, was the young lady, wrapped up in a hopera-cloak, as it might be, and all alone. I opened the gate that night, so I went up when the coach come, and he vos a-waitin’ at the parlor-door — and wasn’t he a-trembling, neither? The poor creetur see him, and could hardly walk to meet him. ‘Oh, Harry!’ she says, ‘that it should have come to this; and all for my sake,’ says she, putting her hand upon his shoulder. So he puts his arm round her pretty little waist, and leading her gently a little way into the room, so that he might be able to shut the door, he says so kind and soft-like — ‘Why, Kate,’ says he — ”

“Here’s the gentleman you want,” said Ikey, abruptly breaking off in his story, and introducing Mr. Gabriel Parsons to the crest-fallen Watkins Tottle, who at that moment entered the room. Watkins advanced with a wooden expression of passive endurance, and accepted the hand which Mr. Gabriel Parsons held out.

“I want to speak to you,” said Gabriel, with a look strongly expressive of his dislike of the company.

“This way,” replied the imprisoned one, leading the way to the front drawing-room, where rich debtors did the luxurious at the rate of a couple of guineas a day.

“Well, here I am,” said Watkins, as he sat down on the sofa; and placing the palms of his hands on his knees, anxiously glanced at his friend’s countenance.

"Yes; and here you're likely to be," said Gabriel, coolly, as he rattled the money in his unmentionable pockets, and looked out of the window.

"What's the amount with the costs?" inquired Parsons, after an awkward pause.

"37*l.* 3*s.* 10*d.*"

"Have you any money?"

"Nine and sixpence halfpenny."

Mr. Gabriel Parsons walked up and down the room for a few seconds, before he could make up his mind to disclose the plan he had formed; he was accustomed to drive hard bargains, but was always most anxious to conceal his avarice. At length he stopped short, and said, "Tottle, you owe me fifty pounds."

"I do."

"And from all I see, I infer that you are likely to owe it to me."

"I fear I am."

"Though you have every disposition to pay me if you could?"

"Certainly."

"Then," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons, "listen; here's my proposition. You know my way of old. Accept it — yes or no — I will or I won't. I'll pay the debt and costs, and I'll lend you 10*l.* more (which, added to your annuity, will enable you to carry on the war well) if you'll give me your note of hand to pay me one hundred and fifty pounds within six months after you are married to Miss Lillerton."

"My dear —"

"Stop a minute — on one condition; and that is, that you propose to Miss Lillerton at once."

"At once! My dear Parsons, consider."

"It's for you to consider, not me. She knows you well from reputation, though she did not know you personally until lately. Notwithstanding all her maiden modesty, I think she'd be devilish glad to get married out of hand, with as little delay as possible. My wife has sounded her on the subject, and she has confessed."

"What — what?" eagerly interrupted the enamored Watkins.

"Why," replied Parsons, "to say exactly what she has confessed, would be rather difficult, because they only spoke in hints, and so forth; but my wife, who is no bad judge in these cases, declared to me that what she had confessed was as good as to say that she was not insensible of your merits — in fact, that no other man should have her."

Mr. Watkins Tottle rose hastily from his seat, and rang the bell.

"What's that for?" inquired Parsons.

"I want to send the man for the bill stamp," replied Mr. Watkins Tottle.

"Then you've made up your mind?"

"I have," — and they shook hands most cordially. The note of hand was given — the debt and costs were paid — Ikey was satisfied for his trouble, and the two friends soon found themselves on that side of Mr. Solomon Jacobs's establishment on which most of his visitors were very happy when they found themselves once again — to wit, the *outside*.

"Now," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons, as they drove to Norwood together — "you shall have an opportunity to make the disclosure to-night, and mind you speak out, Tottle."

"I will — I will!" replied Watkins, valorously.

"How I should like to see you together," ejaculated Mr. Gabriel Parsons. — "What fun!" and he laughed so long and so loudly, that he disconcerted Mr. Watkins Tottle, and frightened the horse.

"There's Fanny and your intended walking about on the lawn," said Gabriel, as they approached the house — "Mind your eye, Tottle."

"Never fear," replied Watkins, resolutely, as he made his way to the spot where the ladies were walking.

"Here's Mr. Tottle, my dear," said Mrs. Parsons, addressing Miss Lillerton. The lady turned quickly round, and acknowledged his courteous salute with the same sort of confusion that Watkins had noticed on their first interview, but with something like a slight expression of disappointment or carelessness.

"Did you see how glad she was to see you?" whispered Parsons to his friend.

"Why I really thought she looked as if she would rather have seen somebody else," replied Tottle.

"Pooh, nonsense!" whispered Parsons again — "it's always the way with the women, young or old. They never show how delighted they are to see those whose presence makes their hearts beat. It's the way with the whole sex, and no man should have lived to your time of life without knowing it. Fanny confessed it to me, when we were first married, over and over again — see what it is to have a wife."

"Certainly," whispered Tottle, whose courage was vanishing fast.

"Well, now, you'd better begin to pave the way," said Parsons, who, having invested some money in the speculation, assumed the office of director.

"Yes, yes, I will — presently," replied Tottle, **greatly** flurried.

"Say something to her, man," urged Parsons again. "Confound it! pay her a compliment, can't you?"

"No! not till after dinner," replied the bashful Tottle, anxious to postpone the evil moment.

"Well, gentlemen," said Mrs. Parsons, "you are really very polite; you stay away the whole morning, after promising to take us out, and when you do come home, you stand whispering together and take no notice of us."

"We were talking of the *business*, my dear, which detained us this morning," replied Parsons, looking significantly at Tottle.

"Dear me! how very quickly the morning has gone," said Miss Lillerton, referring to the gold watch, which was wound up on state occasions, whether it required it or not.

"*I* think it has passed very slowly," mildly suggested Tottle.

("That's right — bravo!") whispered Parsons.

"Indeed!" said Miss Lillerton, with an air of majestic surprise.

"I can only impute it to my unavoidable absence from your society, madam," said Watkins, "and that of Mrs. Parsons."

During this short dialogue, the ladies had been leading the way to the house.

"What the deuce did you stick Fanny into that last compliment for?" inquired Parsons, as they followed together; "it quite spoilt the effect."

"Oh! it really would have been too broad without," replied Watkins Tottle, "much too broad!"

"He's mad!" Parsons whispered his wife, as they entered the drawing-room, "mad from modesty."

"Dear me!" ejaculated the lady, "I never heard of such a thing."

"You'll find we have quite a family dinner, Mr. Tottle," said Mrs. Parsons, when they sat down to table; "Miss Lillerton is one of us, and of course we make no stranger of you."

Mr. Watkins Tottle expressed a hope that the Parsons family never would make a stranger of him; and wished internally that his bashfulness would allow him to feel a little less like a stranger himself.

"Take off the covers, Martha," said Mrs. Parsons, directing the shifting of the scenery with great anxiety. The order was obeyed, and a pair of boiled fowls, with tongue and et ceteras, were displayed at the top, and a fillet of veal at the bottom. On one side of the table two green sauce-tureens, with ladles of the same, were setting to each other in a green dish; and on the other was a curried rabbit, in a brown suit, turned up with lemon.

"Miss Lillerton, my dear," said Mrs. Parsons, "shall I assist you?"

"Thank you, no; I think I'll trouble Mr. Tottle."

Watkins started — trembled — helped the rabbit — and broke a tumbler. The countenance of the lady of the house, which had been all smiles previously, underwent an awful change.

"Extremely sorry," stammered Watkins, assisting himself to currie and parsley and butter, in the extremity of his confusion.

"Not the least consequence," replied Mrs. Parsons, in a tone which implied that it was of the greatest conse-

quence possible, — directing aside the researches of the boy, who was groping under the table for the bits of broken glass.

“I presume,” said Miss Lillerton, “that Mr. Tottle is aware of the interest which bachelors usually pay in such cases ; a dozen glasses for one is the lowest penalty.”

Mr. Gabriel Parsons gave his friend an admonitory tread on the toe. Here was a clear hint that the sooner he ceased to be a bachelor and emancipated himself from such penalties, the better. Mr. Watkins Tottle viewed the observation in the same light, and challenged Mrs. Parsons to take wine, with a degree of presence of mind which, under all the circumstances, was really extraordinary.

“Miss Lillerton,” said Gabriel, “may I have the pleasure ?”

“I shall be most happy.”

“Tottle, will you assist Miss Lillerton, and pass the decanter. Thank you.” (The usual pantomimic ceremony of nodding and sipping gone through) —

“Tottle, were you ever in Suffolk ?” inquired the master of the house, who was burning to tell one of his seven stock stories.

“No,” responded Watkins, adding, by way of a saving clause, “but I’ve been in Devonshire.”

“Ah !” replied Gabriel, “it was in Suffolk that a rather singular circumstance happened to me, many years ago. Did you ever happen to hear me mention it ?”

Mr. Watkins Tottle *had* happened to hear his friend mention it some four hundred times. Of course he expressed great curiosity, and evinced the utmost impa-

tience to hear the story again. Mr. Gabriel Parsons forthwith attempted to proceed, in spite of the interruptions to which, as our readers must frequently have observed, the master of the house is often exposed in such cases. We will attempt to give them an idea of our meaning.

"When I was in Suffolk," said Mr. Gabriel Parsons —

"Take off the fowls first, Martha," said Mrs. Parsons. "I beg your pardon, my dear."

"When I was in Suffolk," resumed Mr. Parsons, with an impatient glance at his wife, who pretended not to observe it, "which is now some years ago, business led me to the town of Bury St. Edmund's. I had to stop at the principal places in my way, and therefore, for the sake of convenience, I travelled in a gig. I left Sudbury one dark night — it was winter time — about nine o'clock; the rain poured in torrents, the wind howled among the trees that skirted the roadside, and I was obliged to proceed at a foot-pace, for I could hardly see my hand before me, it was so dark —"

"John," interrupted Mrs. Parsons, in a low, hollow voice, "don't spill that gravy."

"Fanny," said Parsons impatiently, "I wish you'd defer these domestic reproofs to some more suitable time. Really, my dear, these constant interruptions are very annoying."

"My dear, I didn't interrupt you," said Mrs. Parsons.

"But, my dear, you *did* interrupt me," remonstrated Mr. Parsons.

"How very absurd you are, my love! I must give directions to the servants; I am quite sure that if I sat here and allowed John to spill the gravy over the new

carpet, you'd be the first to find fault when you saw the stain to-morrow morning."

"Well," continued Gabriel, with a resigned air, as if he knew there was no getting over the point about the carpet, "I was just saying, it was so dark that I could hardly see my hand before me. The road was very lonely, and I assure you, Tottle (this was a device to arrest the wandering attention of that individual, which was distracted by a confidential communication between Mrs. Parsons and Martha, accompanied by the delivery of a large bunch of keys), I assure you, Tottle, I became somehow impressed with a sense of the loneliness of my situation —"

"Pie to your master," interrupted Mrs. Parsons, again directing the servant.

"Now, pray, my dear," remonstrated Parsons once more, very pettishly. Mrs. P. turned up her hands and eyebrows, and appealed in dumb show to Miss Lillerton. "As I turned a corner of the road," resumed Gabriel, "the horse stopped short, and reared tremendously. I pulled up, jumped out, ran to his head, and found a man lying on his back in the middle of the road, with his eyes fixed on the sky. I thought he was dead; but no, he was alive, and there appeared to be nothing the matter with him. He jumped up, and putting his hand to his chest, and fixing upon me the most earnest gaze you can imagine, exclaimed —"

"Pudding here," said Mrs. Parsons.

"Oh! it's no use," exclaimed the host, now rendered desperate. "Here, Tottle; a glass of wine. It's useless to attempt relating anything when Mrs. Parsons is present."

This attack was received in the usual way. Mrs. Par-

sons talked to Miss Lillerton and at her better half; expatiated on the impatience of men generally; hinted that her husband was peculiarly vicious in this respect, and wound up by insinuating that she must be one of the best tempers that ever existed, or she never could put up with it. Really what she had to endure sometimes, was more than any one who saw her in every-day life could by possibility suppose. — The story was now a painful subject, and therefore Mr. Parsons declined to enter into any details, and contented himself by stating that the man was a maniac, who had escaped from a neighboring mad-house.

The cloth was removed; the ladies soon afterwards retired, and Miss Lillerton played the piano in the drawing-room overhead, very loudly, for the edification of the visitor. Mr. Watkins Tottle and Mr. Gabriel Parsons sat chatting comfortably enough, until the conclusion of the second bottle, when the latter, in proposing an adjournment to the drawing-room, informed Watkins that he had concerted a plan with his wife, for leaving him and Miss Lillerton alone, soon after tea.

"I say," said Tottle, as they went up-stairs, "don't you think it would be better if we put it off till — till — to-morrow?"

"Don't *you* think it would have been much better if I had left you in that wretched hole I found you in this morning?" retorted Parsons, bluntly.

"Well — well — I only made a suggestion," said poor Watkins Tottle, with a deep sigh.

Tea was soon concluded, and Miss Lillerton drawing a small work-table on one side of the fire, and placing a little wooden frame upon it, something like a miniature

clay-mill without the horse, was soon busily engaged in making a watch-guard with brown silk.

"God bless me!" exclaimed Parsons, starting up with well-feigned surprise, "I've forgotten those confounded letters. Tottle, I know you'll excuse me."

If Tottle had been a free agent, he would have allowed no one to leave the room on any pretence, except himself. As it was, however, he was obliged to look cheerful when Parsons quitted the apartment.

He had scarcely left, when Martha put her head into the room, with — "Please, ma'am, you're wanted."

Mrs. Parsons left the room, shut the door carefully after her, and Mr. Watkins Tottle was left alone with Miss Lillerton.

For the first five minutes there was a dead silence. — Mr. Watkins Tottle was thinking how he should begin, and Miss Lillerton appeared to be thinking of nothing. The fire was burning low; Mr. Watkins Tottle stirred it, and put some coals on.

"Hem!" coughed Miss Lillerton; Mr. Watkins Tottle thought the fair creature had spoken. "I beg your pardon," said he.

"Eh?"

"I thought you spoke."

"No."

"Oh!"

"There are some books on the sofa, Mr. Tottle, if you would like to look at them," said Miss Lillerton, after the lapse of another five minutes.

"No, thank you," returned Watkins: and then he added, with a courage which was perfectly astonishing, even to himself, "Madam, that is Miss Lillerton, I wish to speak to you."



"To me!" said Miss Lillerton, letting the silk drop from her hands, and sliding her chair back a few paces. — "Speak — to me!"

"To you, madam — and on the subject of the state of your affections." The lady hastily rose, and would have left the room; but Mr. Watkins Tottle gently detained her by the hand, and holding it as far from him as the joint length of their arms would permit, he thus proceeded: "Pray do not misunderstand me, or suppose that I am led to address you, after so short an acquaintance, by any feeling of my own merits — for merits I have none which could give me a claim to your hand. I hope you will acquit me of any presumption when I explain that I have been acquainted through Mrs. Parsons, with the state — that is, that Mrs. Parsons has told me — at least, not Mrs. Parsons, but —" here Watkins began to wander, but Miss Lillerton relieved him.

"Am I to understand, Mr. Tottle, that Mrs. Parsons has acquainted you with my feeling — my affection — I mean my respect for an individual of the opposite sex?"

"She has."

"Then, what?" inquired Miss Lillerton, averting her face, with a girlish air, "what could induce *you* to seek such an interview as this? What can your object be? How can I promote your happiness, Mr. Tottle?"

Here was the time for a flourish — "By allowing me," replied Watkins, falling bump on his knees, and breaking two brace-buttons and a waistcoat-string, in the act — "By allowing me to be your slave, your servant — in short, by unreservedly making me the confidant of your heart's feelings — may I say, for the

promotion of your own happiness — may I say, in order that you may become the wife of a kind and affectionate husband ? ”

“ Disinterested creature ! ” exclaimed Miss Lillerton, hiding her face in a white pocket-handkerchief with an eyelet-hole border.

Mr. Watkins Tottle thought that if the lady knew all, she might possibly alter her opinion on this last point. He raised the tip of her middle finger ceremoniously to his lips, and got off his knees as gracefully as he could. “ My information was correct ? ” he tremulously inquired, when he was once more on his feet.

“ It was.” Watkins elevated his hands and looked up to the ornament in the centre of the ceiling, which had been made for a lamp, by way of expressing his rapture.

“ Our situation, Mr. Tottle,” resumed the lady, glancing at him through one of the eyelet-holes, “ is a most peculiar and delicate one.”

“ It is,” said Mr. Tottle.

“ Our acquaintance has been of *so* short duration,” said Miss Lillerton.

“ Only a week,” assented Watkins Tottle.

“ Oh ! more than that,” exclaimed the lady, in a tone of surprise.

“ Indeed ! ” said Tottle.

“ More than a month — more than two months ! ” said Miss Lillerton.

“ Rather odd, this,” thought Watkins.

“ Oh ! ” he said, recollecting Parsons’s assurance that she had known him from report, “ I understand. But, my dear madam, pray consider. The longer this acquaintance has existed, the less reason is there for delay

now. Why not at once fix a period for gratifying the hopes of your devoted admirer?"

"It has been represented to me again and again that this is the course I ought to pursue," replied Miss Lillerton, "but pardon my feelings of delicacy, Mr. Tottle — pray excuse this embarrassment — I have peculiar ideas on such subjects, and I am quite sure that I never could summon up fortitude enough to name the day to my future husband."

"Then allow *me* to name it," said Tottle, eagerly.

"I should like to fix it myself," replied Miss Lillerton, bashfully, "but I cannot do so without at once resorting to a third party."

"A third party!" thought Watkins Tottle; "who the deuce is that to be, I wonder!"

"Mr. Tottle," continued Miss Lillerton, "you have made me a most disinterested and kind offer — that offer I accept. Will you at once be the bearer of a note from me to — to Mr. Timson?"

"Mr. Timson!" said Watkins.

"After what has passed between us," responded Miss Lillerton, still averting her head, "you must understand whom I mean; Mr. Timson, the — the — clergyman."

"Mr. Timson, the clergyman!" ejaculated Watkins Tottle, in a state of inexpressible beatitude, and positive wonder at his own success. "Angel! Certainly — this moment!"

"I'll prepare it immediately," said Miss Lillerton, making for the door; "the events of this day have flurried me so much, Mr. Tottle, that I shall not leave my room again this evening; I will send you the note by the servant."

"Stay — stay," cried Watkins Tottle, still keeping a

most respectful distance from the lady ; “ when shall we meet again ? ”

“ Oh ! Mr. Tottle,” replied Miss Lillerton, coquettishly, “ when *we* are married, I can never see you too often, nor thank you too much ; ” and she left the room.

Mr. Watkins Tottle flung himself into an arm-chair, and indulged in the most delicious reveries of future bliss, in which the idea of “ Five hundred pounds per annum, with an uncontrolled power of disposing of it by her last will and testament,” was somehow or other the foremost. He had gone through the interview so well, and it had terminated so admirably, that he almost began to wish he had expressly stipulated for the settlement of the annual five hundred on himself.

“ May I come in ? ” said Mr. Gabriel Parsons, peeping in at the door.

“ You may,” replied Watkins.

“ Well, have you done it ? ” anxiously inquired Gabriel.

“ Have I done it ! ” said Watkins Tottle, “ Hush — I’m going to the clergyman.”

“ No ! ” said Parsons. “ How well you have managed it ! ”

“ Where does Timson live ? ” inquired Watkins.

“ At his uncle’s,” replied Gabriel, “ just round the lane. He’s waiting for a living, and has been assisting his uncle here for the last two or three months. But how well you have done it — I didn’t think you could have carried it off so ! ”

Mr. Watkins Tottle was proceeding to demonstrate that the Richardsonian principle was the best on which love could possibly be made, when he was interrupted by the entrance of Martha, with a little pink note folded like a fancy cocked hat.

"Miss Lillerton's compliments," said Martha, as she delivered it into Tottle's hands, and vanished.

"Do you observe the delicacy?" said Tottle, appealing to Mr. Gabriel Parsons. "*Compliments not love*, by the servant, eh?"

Mr. Gabriel Parsons didn't exactly know what reply to make, so he poked the forefinger of his right hand between the third and fourth ribs of Mr. Watkins Tottle.

"Come," said Watkins, when the explosion of mirth consequent on this practical jest had subsided, "we'll be off at once — let's lose no time."

"Capital!" echoed Gabriel Parsons; and in five minutes they were at the garden-gate of the villa tenanted by the uncle of Mr. Timson.

"Is Mr. Charles Timson at home?" inquired Mr. Watkins Tottle of Mr. Charles Timson's uncle's man.

"Mr. Charles *is* at home," replied the man, stammering; "but he desired me to say he couldn't be interrupted, sir, by any of the parishioners."

"I am not a parishioner," replied Watkins.

"Is Mr. Charles writing a sermon, Tom?" inquired Parsons, thrusting himself forward.

"No, Mr. Parsons, sir; he's not exactly writing a sermon, but he is practising the violoncello in his own bedroom, and gave strict orders not to be disturbed."

"Say I'm here," replied Gabriel, leading the way across the garden; "Mr. Parsons and Mr. Tottle, on private and particular business."

They were shown into the parlor, and the servant departed to deliver his message. The distant groaning of the violoncello ceased; footsteps were heard on the stairs; and Mr. Timson presented himself, and shook hands with Parsons with the utmost cordiality.

"How do you do, sir?" said Watkins Tottle, with great solemnity.

"How do *you* do, sir?" replied Timson, with as much coldness as if it were a matter of perfect indifference to him how he did, as it very likely was.

"I beg to deliver this note to you," said Watkins Tottle, producing the cocked hat.

"From Miss Lillerton!" said Timson, suddenly changing color. "Pray sit down."

Mr. Watkins Tottle sat down; and while Timson perused the note, fixed his eyes on an oyster-sauce-colored portrait of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which hung over the fireplace.

Mr. Timson rose from his seat when he had concluded the note, and looked dubiously at Parsons — "May I ask," he inquired, appealing to Watkins Tottle, "whether our friend here is acquainted with the object of your visit?"

"Our friend is in *my* confidence," replied Watkins, with considerable importance.

"Then, sir," said Timson, seizing both Tottle's hands, "allow me in his presence to thank you most unfeignedly and cordially, for the noble part you have acted in this affair."

"He thinks I recommended him," thought Tottle. "Confound these fellows! they never think of anything but their fees."

"I deeply regret having misunderstood your intentions, my dear sir," continued Timson. "Disinterested and manly, indeed! There are very few men who would have acted as you have done."

Mr. Watkins Tottle could not help thinking that this last remark was anything but complimentary.

He therefore inquired, rather hastily, "When is it to be?"

"On Thursday," replied Timson, — "on Thursday morning at half-past eight."

"Uncommonly early," observed Watkins Tottle, with an air of triumphant self-denial. "I shall hardly be able to get down here by that hour." (This was intended for a joke.)

"Never mind, my dear fellow," replied Timson, all suavity, shaking hands with Tottle again most heartily, "so long as we see you to breakfast, you know —"

"Eh!" said Parsons, with one of the most extraordinary expressions of countenance that ever appeared in a human face.

"What!" ejaculated Watkins Tottle, at the same moment.

"I say that so long as we see you to breakfast," repeated Timson, "we will excuse your being absent from the ceremony, though of course your presence at it would give us the utmost pleasure."

Mr. Watkins Tottle staggered against the wall, and fixed his eyes on Timson with appalling perseverance.

"Timson," said Parsons, hurriedly brushing his hat with his left arm, "when you say 'us,' whom do you mean?"

Mr. Timson looked foolish in his turn, when he replied, "Why — Mrs. Timson that will be this day week: Miss Lillerton that is —"

"Now don't stare at that idiot in the corner," angrily exclaimed Parsons, as the extraordinary convulsions of Watkins Tottle's countenance excited the wondering gaze of Timson, — "but have the goodness to tell me in three words the contents of that note."

"This note," replied Timson, "is from Miss Lillerton, to whom I have been for the last five weeks regularly engaged. Her singular scruples and strange feeling on some points have hitherto prevented my bringing the engagement to that termination which I so anxiously desire. She informs me here, that she sounded Mrs. Parsons with the view of making her her confidant and go-between, that Mrs. Parsons informed this elderly gentleman, Mr. Tottle, of the circumstance, and that he, in the most kind and delicate terms, offered to assist us in any way, and even undertook to convey this note, which contains the promise I have long sought in vain — an act of kindness for which I can never be sufficiently grateful."

"Good night, Timson," said Parsons, hurrying off, and carrying the bewildered Tottle with him.

"Won't you stay — and have something?" said Timson.

"No, thank ye," replied Parsons; "I've had quite enough;" and away he went, followed by Watkins Tottle in a state of stupefaction.

Mr. Gabriel Parsons whistled until they had walked some quarter of a mile past his own gate, when he suddenly stopped, and said, —

"You are a clever fellow, Tottle, a'n't you?"

"I don't know," said the unfortunate Watkins.

"I suppose you'll say this is Fanny's fault, won't you?" inquired Gabriel.

"I don't know anything about it," replied the bewildered Tottle.

"Well," said Parsons, turning on his heel to go home, the next time you make an offer, you had better speak plainly, and don't throw a chance away. And the next

time you're locked up in a spunging-house, just wait there till I come and take you out, there's a good fellow."

How, or at what hour, Mr. Watkins Tottle returned to Cecil Street is unknown. His boots were seen outside his bedroom-door next morning; but we have the authority of his landlady for stating that he neither emerged therefrom nor accepted sustenance for four-and-twenty hours. At the expiration of that period, and when a council of war was being held in the kitchen on the propriety of summoning the parochial beadle to break his door open, he rang his bell, and demanded a cup of milk-and-water. The next morning he went through the formalities of eating and drinking as usual, but a week afterwards he was seized with a relapse, while perusing the list of marriages in a morning paper, from which he never perfectly recovered.

A few weeks after the last-named occurrence, the body of a gentleman unknown was found in the Regent's canal. In the trousers-pockets were four shillings and threepence halfpenny; a matrimonial advertisement from a lady, which appeared to have been cut out of a Sunday paper; a toothpick, and a card-case, which it is confidently believed would have led to the identification of the unfortunate gentleman, but for the circumstance of there being none but blank cards in it. Mr. Watkins Tottle absented himself from his lodgings shortly before. A bill, which has not been taken up, was presented next morning; and a bill, which has not been taken down, was soon afterwards affixed in his parlor-window.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BLOOMSBURY CHRISTENING.

[The Author may be permitted to observe that this sketch was published some time before the Farce entitled "The Christening" was first represented.]

MR. NICODEMUS DUMPS, or, as his acquaintance called him, "long Dumps," was a bachelor, six feet high, and fifty years old; cross, cadaverous, odd, and ill-natured. He was never happy but when he was miserable; and always miserable when he had the best reason to be happy. The only real comfort of his existence was to make everybody about him wretched — then he might be truly said to enjoy life. He was afflicted with a situation in the Bank worth five hundred a year, and he rented a "first-floor furnished," at Pentonville, which he originally took because it commanded a dismal prospect of an adjacent churchyard. He was familiar with the face of every tombstone, and the burial service seemed to excite his strongest sympathy. His friends said he was surly — he insisted he was nervous; they thought him a lucky dog, but he protested that he was "the most unfortunate man in the world." Cold as he was, and wretched as he declared himself to be, he was not wholly unsusceptible of attachments. He revered the memory of Hoyle, as he was himself an admirable and imperturbable whist-player, and he chuckled with delight at a fretful and impatient adversary. He adored King Herod for his massacre of the innocents; and if he hated one thing more than another, it was a child. However, he could

hardly be said to hate anything in particular, because he disliked everything in general; but perhaps his greatest antipathies were cabs, old women, doors that would not shut, musical amateurs, and omnibus cads. He subscribed to the "Society for the Suppression of Vice," for the pleasure of putting a stop to any harmless amusements; and he contributed largely towards the support of two itinerant methodist parsons, in the amiable hope that if circumstances rendered any people happy in this world, they might perchance be rendered miserable by fears for the next.

Mr. Dumps had a nephew who had been married about a year, and who was somewhat of a favorite with his uncle, because he was an admirable subject to exercise his misery-creating powers upon. Mr. Charles Kitterbell was a small, sharp, spare man, with a very large head, and a broad, good-humored countenance. He looked like a faded giant, with the head and face partially restored; and he had a cast in his eye which rendered it quite impossible for any one with whom he conversed to know where he was looking. His eyes appeared fixed on the wall, and he was staring you out of countenance; in short, there was no catching his eye, and perhaps it is a merciful dispensation of Providence that such eyes are not catching. In addition to these characteristics, it may be added that Mr. Charles Kitterbell was one of the most credulous and matter-of-fact little personages that ever took to himself a wife, and *for* himself a house in Great Russell Street, Bedford Square. (Uncle Dumps always dropped the "Bedford Square," and inserted in lieu thereof the dreadful words "Tottenham Court Road.")

"No, but uncle, 'pon my life you must — you must

promise to be godfather," said Mr. Kitterbell, as he sat in conversation with his respected relative one morning.

"I cannot, indeed I cannot," returned Dumps.

"Well, but why not? Jemima will think it very unkind. It's very little trouble."

"As to the trouble," rejoined the most unhappy man in existence, "I don't mind that; but my nerves are in that state — I cannot go through the ceremony. You know I don't like going out. — For God's sake, Charles, don't fidget with that stool so; you'll drive me mad." Mr. Kitterbell, quite regardless of his uncle's nerves, had occupied himself for some ten minutes in describing a circle on the floor with one leg of the office-stool on which he was seated, keeping the other three up in the air, and holding fast on by the desk.

"I beg your pardon, uncle," said Kitterbell, quite abashed, suddenly releasing his hold of the desk, and bringing the three wandering legs back to the floor, with a force sufficient to drive them through it.

"But come, don't refuse. If it's a boy, you know, we must have two godfathers."

"If it's a boy!" said Dumps; "why can't you say at once whether it *is* a boy or not?"

"I should be very happy to tell you, but it's impossible I can undertake to say whether it's a girl or a boy, if the child isn't born yet."

"Not born yet!" echoed Dumps, with a gleam of hope lighting up his lugubrious visage. "Oh, well, it *may* be a girl, and then you won't want me; or if it is a boy, it *may* die before it is christened."

"I hope not," said the father that expected to be, looking very grave.

"I hope not," acquiesced Dumps, evidently pleased

with the subject. He was beginning to get happy. "I hope not, but distressing cases frequently occur during the first two or three days of a child's life ; fits, I am told, are exceedingly common, and alarming convulsions are almost matters of course."

"Lord, uncle," ejaculated little Kitterbell, gasping for breath.

"Yes ; my landlady was confined — let me see — last Tuesday : an uncommonly fine boy. On the Thursday night the nurse was sitting with him upon her knee before the fire, and he was as well as possible. Suddenly he became black in the face, and alarmingly spasmodic. The medical man was instantly sent for, and every remedy was tried, but —"

"How frightful !" interrupted the horror-stricken Kitterbell.

"The child died, of course. However, your child *may* not die ; and if it should be a boy, and should *live* to be christened, why I suppose I must be one of the sponsors." Dumps was evidently good-natured on the faith of his anticipations.

"Thank you, uncle," said his agitated nephew, grasping his hand as warmly as if he had done him some essential service. "Perhaps I had better not tell Mrs. K. what you have mentioned."

"Why, if she's low-spirited, perhaps you had better not mention the melancholy case to her," returned Dumps, who of course had invented the whole story ; "though perhaps it would be but doing your duty as a husband to prepare her for the *worst*."

A day or two afterwards, as Dumps was perusing a morning paper at the chop-house which he regularly frequented, the following paragraph met his eye : —

"Births. — On Saturday, the 18th inst., in Great Russell Street the lady of Charles Kitterbell, Esq., of a son."

"It is a boy!" he exclaimed, dashing down the paper, to the astonishment of the waiters. "It is a boy!" But he speedily regained his composure as his eye rested on a paragraph quoting the number of infant deaths from the bills of mortality.

Six weeks passed away, and as no communication had been received from the Kitterbells, Dumps was beginning to flatter himself that the child was dead, when the following note painfully resolved his doubts: —

"Great Russell Street,

"Monday morning.

"DEAR UNCLE, — You will be delighted to hear that my dear Jemima has left her room, and that your future godson is getting on capitally. He was very thin at first, but he is getting much larger, and nurse says he is filling out every day. He cries a good deal, and is a very singular color, which made Jemima and me rather uncomfortable; but as nurse says it's natural, and as of course we know nothing about these things yet, we are quite satisfied with what nurse says. We think he will be a sharp child; and nurse says she's sure he will, because he never goes to sleep. You will readily believe that we are all very happy, only we're a little worn out for want of rest, as he keeps us awake all night; but this we must expect, nurse says, for the first six or eight months. He has been vaccinated, but in consequence of the operation being rather awkwardly performed, some small particles of glass were introduced into the arm with the matter. Perhaps this may in some degree account for his being rather fractious; at least, so nurse says. We propose

to have him christened at twelve o'clock on Friday, at St. George's church, in Hart Street, by the name of Frederick Charles William. Pray don't be later than a quarter before twelve. We shall have a very few friends in the evening, when of course we shall see you. I am sorry to say that the dear boy appears rather restless and uneasy to-day : the cause, I fear, is fever.

“ Believe me, dear Uncle,

“ Yours affectionately,

“ CHARLES KITTERBELL.

“ P. S. — I open this note to say that we have just discovered the cause of little Frederick's restlessness. It is not fever, as I apprehended, but a small pin, which nurse accidentally stuck in his leg yesterday evening. We have taken it out, and he appears more composed, though he still sobs a good deal.”

It is almost unnecessary to say that the perusal of the above interesting statement was no great relief to the mind of the hypochondriacal Dumps. It was impossible to recede, however, and so he put the best face — that is to say, an uncommonly miserable one — upon the matter ; and purchased a handsome silver mug for the infant Kitterbell, upon which he ordered the initials “ F. C. W. K.” with the customary untrained grape-vine-looking flourishes, and a large full stop, to be engraved forthwith.

Monday was a fine day, Tuesday was delightful, Wednesday was equal to either, and Thursday was finer than ever ; four successive fine days in London ! Hackney-coachmen became revolutionary, and crossing-sweepers began to doubt the existence of a First Cause. The *Morning Herald* informed its readers that an old woman

in Camden Town had been heard to say that the fineness of the season was "unprecedented in the memory of the oldest inhabitant;" and Islington clerks with large families and small salaries, left off their black gaiters, disdained to carry their once green cotton umbrellas, and walked to town in the conscious pride of white stockings and cleanly brushed Bluchers. Dumps beheld all this with an eye of supreme contempt — his triumph was at hand. He knew that if it had been fine for four weeks instead of four days, it would rain when he went out; he was lugubriously happy in the conviction that Friday would be a wretched day — and so it was. "I knew how it would be," said Dumps, as he turned round opposite the Mansion House at half-past eleven o'clock on the Friday morning. "I knew how it would be; *I* am concerned, and that's enough;" — and certainly the appearance of the day was sufficient to depress the spirits of a much more buoyant-hearted individual than himself. It had rained, without a moment's cessation, since eight o'clock; everybody that passed up Cheapside, and down Cheapside, looked wet, cold, and dirty. All sorts of forgotten and long-concealed umbrellas had been put into requisition. Cabs whisked about, with the "fare" as carefully boxed up behind two glazed calico curtains as any mysterious picture in any one of Mrs. Radcliffe's castles; omnibus horses smoked like steam-engines; nobody thought of "standing up" under doorways or arches they were painfully convinced it was a hopeless case; and so everybody went hastily along, jumbling and jostling, and swearing and perspiring, and slipping about, like amateur skaters behind wooden chairs on the Serpentine on a frosty Sunday.

Dumps paused; he could not think of walking, being

rather smart for the christening. If he took a cab he was sure to be spilt, and a hackney-coach was too expensive for his economical ideas. An omnibus was waiting at the opposite corner — it was a desperate case — he had never heard of an omnibus upsetting or running away, and if the cad did knock him down, he could “pull him up” in return.

“Now, sir!” cried the young gentleman who officiated as “cad” to the “Lads of the Village,” which was the name of the machine just noticed. Dumps crossed.

“This vay, sir!” shouted the driver of the “Hark-away,” pulling up his vehicle immediately across the door of the opposition — “This vay, sir — he’s full.” Dumps hesitated, whereupon the “Lads of the Village” commenced pouring out a torrent of abuse against the “Hark-away;” but the conductor of the “Admiral Napier” settled the contest in a most satisfactory manner for all parties, by seizing Dumps round the waist, and thrusting him into the middle of his vehicle which had just come up and only wanted the sixteenth inside.

“All right,” said the “Admiral,” and off the thing thundered, like a fire-engine at full gallop, with the kidnapped customer inside, standing in the position of a half doubled up bootjack, and falling about with every jerk of the machine, first on the one side and then on the other like a “Jack-in-the-green,” on May-day, setting to the lady with a brass ladle.

“For Heaven’s sake, where am I to sit?” inquired the miserable man of an old gentleman, into whose stomach he had just fallen for the fourth time.

“Anywhere but on my *chest*, sir,” replied the old gentleman in a surly tone.

“Perhaps the *box* would suit the gentleman better,”

suggested a very damp lawyer's clerk, in a pink shirt, and a smirking countenance.

After a great deal of struggling and falling about, Dumps at last managed to squeeze himself into a seat, which in addition to the slight disadvantage of being between a window that would not shut, and a door that must be open, placed him in close contact with a passenger who had been walking about all the morning without an umbrella, and who looked as if he had spent the day in a full water-butt — only wetter.

"Don't bang the door so," said Dumps to the conductor, as he shut it, after letting out four of the passengers; "I am very nervous — it destroys me."

"Did any gen'l'm'n say anythink?" replied the cad, thrusting in his head, and trying to look as if he didn't understand the request.

"I told you not to bang the door so!" repeated Dumps, with an expression of countenance like the knave of clubs, in convulsions.

"Oh! vy, it's rather a sing'ler circumstance about this here door, sir, that it von't shut without banging," replied the conductor; and he opened the door very wide, and shut it again with a terrific bang, in proof of the assertion.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said a little prim, wheezing old gentleman, sitting opposite Dumps, "I beg your pardon; but have you ever observed, when you have been in an omnibus on a wet day, that four people out of five always come in with large cotton umbrellas, without a handle at the top, or the brass spike at the bottom?"

"Why, sir," returned Dumps, as he heard the clock strike twelve, "it never struck me before; but now you mention it, I — Hollo! hollo!" shouted the persecuted

individual, as the omnibus dashed past Drury Lane, where he had directed to be set down. — “Where is the cad?”

“I think he’s on the box, sir,” said the young gentleman before noticed in the pink shirt, which looked like a white one ruled with red ink.

“I want to be set down!” said Dumps, in a faint voice, overcome by his previous efforts.

“I think these cads wants to be *set down*,” returned the attorney’s clerk, chuckling at his sally.

“Hollo!” cried Dumps again.

“Hollo!” echoed the passengers. The omnibus passed St. Giles’s church.

“Hold hard!” said the conductor; “I’m blowed if we ha’n’t forgot the gen’l’m’n as vas to be set down at Doory Lane. — Now, sir, make haste, if you please,” he added, opening the door, and assisting Dumps out with as much coolness as if it was “all right.” Dumps’s indignation was for once getting the better of his cynical equanimity. “Drury Lane!” he gasped, with the voice of a boy in a cold bath for the first time.

“Doory Lane, sir? — yes, sir, — third turning on the right-hand side, sir.”

Dumps’s passion was paramount; he clutched his umbrella, and was striding off with the firm determination of not paying the fare. The cad, by a remarkable coincidence, happened to entertain a directly contrary opinion, and Heaven knows how far the altercation would have proceeded if it had not been most ably and satisfactorily brought to a close by the driver.

“Hollo!” said that respectable person, standing up on the box, and leaning with one hand on the roof of the omnibus. “Hollo, Tom! tell the gentleman if so be as

he feels aggrieved, we will take him up to the **Edge-er** (Edgeware) Road for nothing, and set him down at Doory Lane when we comes back. He can't reject that, anyhow."

The argument was irresistible: Dumps paid the disputed sixpence, and in a quarter of an hour was on the staircase of No. 14, Great Russell Street.

Everything indicated that preparations were making for the reception of "a few friends" in the evening. Two dozen extra tumblers, and four ditto wine-glasses — looking anything but transparent, with little bits of straw in them — were on the slab in the passage, just arrived. There was a great smell of nutmeg, port wine, and almonds, on the staircase; the covers were taken off the stair-carpet, and the figure of Venus on the first landing looked as if she were ashamed of the composition-candle in her right hand, which contrasted beautifully with the lamp-black drapery of the goddess of love. The female servant (who looked very warm and bustling) ushered Dumps into a front drawing-room, very prettily furnished, with a plentiful sprinkling of little baskets, paper table-mats, china watchmen, pink and gold albums, and rainbow-bound little books on the different tables.

"Ah, uncle!" said Mr. Kitterbell, "how d'ye do? Allow me — Jemima, my dear — my uncle. I think you've seen Jemima before, sir?"

"Have had the *pleasure*," returned big Dumps, his tone and look making it doubtful whether in his life he had ever experienced the sensation.

"I'm sure," said Mrs. Kitterbell, with a languid smile, and a slight cough. "I'm sure — hem — any friend — of Charles's — hem — much less a relation, is —"

"I knew you'd say so, my love," said little Kitterbell,



George Cruikshank

who, while he appeared to be gazing on the opposite houses, was looking at his wife with a most affectionate air: "Bless you!" The last two words were accompanied with a simper, and a squeeze of the hand, which stirred up all Uncle Dumps's bile.

"Jane, tell nurse to bring down baby," said Mrs. Kitterbell, addressing the servant. Mrs. Kitterbell was a tall, thin young lady, with very light hair, and a particularly white face — one of those young women who almost invariably, though one hardly knows why, recall to one's mind the idea of a cold fillet of veal. Out went the servant, and in came the nurse, with a remarkably small parcel in her arms, packed up in a blue mantle trimmed with white fur. — This was the baby.

"Now, uncle," said Mr. Kitterbell, lifting up that part of the mantle which covered the infant's face, with an air of great triumph, "*Who* do you think he's like?"

"He! he! Yes, who?" said Mrs. K., putting her arm through her husband's, and looking up into Dumps's face with an expression of as much interest as she was capable of displaying.

"Good God, how small he is!" cried the amiable uncle, starting back with well-feigned surprise; "*remarkably* small indeed."

"Do you think so?" inquired poor little Kitterbell, rather alarmed. "He's a monster to what he was — a'n't he, nurse?"

"He's a dear," said the nurse, squeezing the child, and evading the question — not because she scrupled to disguise the fact, but because she couldn't afford to throw away the chance of Dumps's half-crown.

"Well, but who is he like?" inquired little Kitterbell.

Dumps looked at the little pink heap before him, and

only thought at the moment of the best mode of mortifying the youthful parents.

"I really don't know *who* he's like," he answered, very well knowing the reply expected of him.

"Don't you think he's like *me*?" inquired his nephew with a knowing air.

"Oh, *decidedly* not!" returned Dumps, with an emphasis not to be misunderstood. "Decidedly not like you. — Oh, certainly not."

"Like Jemima?" asked Kitterbell, faintly.

"Oh dear, no; not in the least. I'm no judge, of course, in such cases; but I really think he's more like one of those little carved representations that one sometimes sees blowing a trumpet on a tombstone!" The nurse stooped down over the child, and with great difficulty prevented an explosion of mirth. Pa and ma looked almost as miserable as their amiable uncle.

"Well!" said the disappointed little father, "you'll be better able to tell what he's like by and by. You shall see him this evening with his mantle off."

"Thank you," said Dumps, feeling particularly grateful.

"Now, my love," said Kitterbell to his wife, "it's time we were off. We're to meet the other godfather, and the godmother at the church, uncle, — Mr. and Mrs. Wilson from over the way — uncommonly nice people. My love, are you well wrapped up?"

"Yes, dear."

"Are you sure you won't have another shawl?" inquired the anxious husband.

"No, sweet," returned the charming mother, accepting Dumps's proffered arm; and the little party entered the hackney-coach that was to take them to the church;

Dumps amusing Mrs. Kitterbell by expatiating largely on the danger of measles, thrush, teeth-cutting, and other interesting diseases to which children are subject.

The ceremony (which occupied about five minutes) passed off without anything particular occurring. The clergyman had to dine some distance from town, and had two churchings, three christenings, and a funeral to perform in something less than an hour. The godfathers and godmother, therefore, promised to renounce the devil and all his works — “and all that sort of thing” — as little Kitterbell said — “in less than no time;” and, with the exception of Dumps nearly letting the child fall into the font when he handed it to the clergyman, the whole affair went off in the usual business-like and matter-of-course manner, and Dumps reëntered the Bank-gates at two o’clock with a heavy heart, and the painful conviction that he was regularly booked for an evening party.

Evening came — and so did Dumps’s pumps, black silk stockings, and white cravat which he had ordered to be forwarded, per boy, from Pentonville. The depressed godfather dressed himself at a friend’s counting-house, from whence, with his spirits fifty degrees below proof, he sallied forth — as the weather had cleared up, and the evening was tolerably fine — to walk to Great Russell Street. Slowly he paced up Cheapside, Newgate Street, down Snow Hill, and up Holborn ditto, looking as grim as the figure-head of a man-of-war, and finding out fresh causes of misery at every step. As he was crossing the corner of Hatton Garden, a man apparently intoxicated rushed against him, and would have knocked him down, had he not been providentially caught by a very genteel young man, who happened to be close to

him at the time. The shock so disarranged Dumps's nerves, as well as his dress, that he could hardly stand. The gentleman took his arm, and in the kindest manner walked with him as far as Furnival's Inn. Dumps, for about the first time in his life, felt grateful and polite and he and the gentlemanly looking young man parted with mutual expressions of good will.

"There are at least some well-disposed men in the world," ruminated the misanthropical Dumps, as he proceeded towards his destination.

Rat — tat — ta-ra-ra-ra-rat — knocked a hackney-coachman at Kitterbell's door, in imitation of a gentleman's servant, just as Dumps reached it; and out came an old lady in a large toque, and an old gentleman in a blue coat, and three female copies of the old lady in pink dresses, and shoes to match.

"It's a large party," sighed the unhappy godfather, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, and leaning against the area-railings. It was some time before the miserable man could muster up courage to knock at the door, and when he did, the smart appearance of a neighboring greengrocer (who had been hired to wait for seven and sixpence, and whose calves alone were worth double the money), the lamp in the passage, and the Venus on the landing, added to the hum of many voices, and the sound of a harp and two violins, painfully convinced him that his surmises were but too well-founded.

"How are you?" said little Kitterbell, in a greater bustle than ever, bolting out of the little back-parlor with a corkscrew in his hand, and various particles of saw-lust, looking like so many inverted commas, on his inexpressibles.

"Good God!" said Dumps, turning into the aforesaid

parlor to put his shoes on which he had brought in his coat-pocket, and still more appalled by the sight of seven fresh-drawn corks, and a corresponding number of decanters. "How many people are there up-stairs?"

"Oh, not above thirty-five. We've had the carpet taken up in the back drawing-room, and the piano and the card-tables are in the front. Jemima thought we'd better have a regular sit-down supper in the front parlor, because of the speechifying, and all that. But, Lord! uncle, what's the matter?" continued the excited little man, as Dumps stood with one shoe on, rummaging his pockets with the most frightful distortion of visage. "What have you lost? Your pocket-book?"

"No," returned Dumps, diving first into one pocket and then into the other, and speaking in a voice like Desdemona with the pillow over her mouth.

"Your card-case? snuff-box? the key of your lodgings?" continued Kitterbell, pouring question on question with the rapidity of lightning.

"No! no!" ejaculated Dumps, still diving eagerly into his empty pocket.

"Not — not — the *mug* you spoke of this morning?"

"Yes, the *mug*!" replied Dumps, sinking into a chair.

"How *could* you have done it?" inquired Kitterbell. "Are you sure you brought it out?"

"Yes! yes! I see it all," said Dumps, starting up as the idea flashed across his mind; "miserable dog that I am — I was born to suffer. I see it all; it was the gentlemanly looking young man!"

"Mr. Dumps!" shouted the greengrocer in a stentorian voice, as he ushered the somewhat recovered godfather into the drawing-room half an hour after the

above declaration. "Mr. Dumps!" — everybody looked at the door, and in came Dumps, feeling about as much out of place as a salmon might be supposed to be on a gravel-walk.

"Happy to see you again," said Mrs. Kitterbell, quite unconscious of the unfortunate man's confusion and misery; "you must allow me to introduce you to a few of our friends: — my mamma, Mr. Dumps — my papa and sisters." Dumps seized the hand of the mother as warmly as if she was his own parent, bowed to the young ladies, and *against* a gentleman behind him, and took no notice whatever of the father, who had been bowing incessantly for three minutes and a quarter.

"Uncle," said little Kitterbell, after Dumps had been introduced to a select dozen or two, "you must let me lead you to the other end of the room, to introduce you to my friend Danton. Such a splendid fellow! — I'm sure you'll like him — this way," — Dumps followed as tractably as a tame bear.

Mr. Danton was a young man of about five-and-twenty, with a considerable stock of impudence, and a very small share of ideas: he was a great favorite, especially with young ladies of from sixteen to twenty-six years of age, both inclusive. He could imitate the French-horn to admiration, sang comic songs most inimitably, and had the most insinuating way of saying impertinent nothings to his doting female admirers. He had acquired, somehow or other, the reputation of being a great wit, and accordingly, whenever he opened his mouth, everybody who knew him laughed very heartily.

The introduction took place in due form. Mr. Danton bowed, and twirled a lady's handkerchief, which he held in his hand, in a most comic way. Everybody smiled.

"Very warm," said Dumps, feeling it necessary to say something.

"Yes. It was warmer yesterday," returned the brilliant Mr. Danton. — A general laugh.

"I have great pleasure in congratulating you on your first appearance in the character of a father, sir," he continued, addressing Dumps — "godfather, I mean." — The young ladies were convulsed, and the gentlemen in ecstasies.

A general hum of admiration interrupted the conversation, and announced the entrance of nurse with the baby. An universal rush of the young ladies immediately took place. (Girls are always *so* fond of babies in company.)

"Oh, you dear!" said one.

"How sweet!" cried another, in a low tone of the most enthusiastic admiration.

"Heavenly!" added a third.

"Oh! what dear little arms!" said a fourth, holding up an arm and fist about the size and shape of the leg of a fowl cleanly picked.

"Did you ever!" — said a little coquette with a large bustle, who looked like a French lithograph, appealing to a gentleman in three waistcoats — "Did you ever!"

"Never in my life," returned her admirer, pulling up his collar.

"Oh! *do* let me take it, nurse," cried another young lady. "The love!"

"Can it open its eyes, nurse?" inquired another, affecting the utmost innocence. — Suffice it to say, that the single ladies unanimously voted him an angel, and that the married ones, *nem. con.*, agreed that he was decidedly the finest baby they had ever beheld — except *their own*.

The quadrilles were resumed with great spirit. Mr Danton was universally admitted to be beyond himself, several young ladies enchanted the company and gained admirers by singing "We met" — "I saw her at the Fancy Fair" — and other equally sentimental and interesting ballads. "The young men," as Mrs. Kitterbell said, "made themselves very agreeable;" the girls did not lose their opportunity; and the evening promised to go off excellently. Dumps didn't mind it; he had devised a plan for himself — a little bit of fun in his own way — and he was almost happy! He played a rubber and lost every point. Mr. Danton said he could not have lost every point, because he made a point of losing: everybody laughed tremendously. Dumps retorted with a better joke, and nobody smiled, with the exception of the host, who seemed to consider it his duty to laugh till he was black in the face, at everything. There was only one drawback — the musicians did not play with quite as much spirit as could have been wished. The cause, however, was satisfactorily explained; for it appeared, on the testimony of a gentleman who had come up from Gravesend in the afternoon, that they had been engaged on board a steamer all day, and had played almost without cessation all the way to Gravesend, and all the way back again.

The "sit-down supper" was excellent; there were four barley-sugar temples on the table, which would have looked beautiful if they had not melted away when the supper began; and a water-mill, whose only fault was that instead of going round it ran over the tablecloth. Then there were fowls, and tongue, and trifle, and sweets, and lobster salad, and potted beef — and everything. And little Kitterbell kept calling out for

clean plates, and the clean plates did not come; and then the gentlemen who wanted the plates said they didn't mind, they'd take a lady's; and then Mrs. Kitterbell applauded their gallantry, and the greengrocer ran about till he thought his seven and sixpence was very hardly earned; and the young ladies didn't eat much for fear it shouldn't look romantic, and the married ladies ate as much as possible, for fear they shouldn't have enough; and a great deal of wine was drunk, and everybody talked and laughed considerably.

"Hush! hush!" said Mr. Kitterbell, rising and looking very important. "My love (this was addressed to his wife at the other end of the table), take care of Mrs. Maxwell, and your mamma and the rest of the married ladies; the gentlemen will persuade the young ladies to fill their glasses, I am sure.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said long Dumps, in a very sepulchral voice and rueful accent, rising from his chair like the ghost in *Don Juan*, "will you have the kindness to charge your glasses? I am desirous of proposing a toast."

A dead silence ensued, and the glasses were filled — everybody looked serious.

"Ladies and gentlemen," slowly continued the ominous Dumps, "I" — (here Mr. Danton imitated two notes from the French-horn, in a very loud key, which electrified the nervous toast-proposer, and convulsed his audience).

"Order! order!" said little Kitterbell, endeavoring to suppress his laughter.

"Order!" said the gentlemen.

"Danton, be quiet," said a particular friend on the opposite side of the table.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” resumed Dumps, somewhat recovered, and not much disconcerted, for he was always a pretty good hand at a speech — “In accordance with what is, I believe, the established usage on these occasions, I, as one of the godfathers of Master Frederick Charles William Kitterbell — (here the speaker’s voice faltered, for he remembered the mug) — venture to rise to propose a toast. I need hardly say that it is the health and prosperity of that young gentleman, the particular event of whose early life we are here to celebrate — (applause). Ladies and gentlemen, it is impossible to suppose that our friends here, whose sincere well-wishers we all are, can pass through life without some trials, considerable suffering, severe affliction, and heavy losses!” — Here the arch-traitor paused, and slowly drew forth a long, white pocket-handkerchief — his example was followed by several ladies. “That these trials may be long spared them is my most earnest prayer, my most fervent wish (a distinct sob from the grandmother). I hope and trust, ladies and gentlemen, that the infant whose christening we have this evening met to celebrate, may not be removed from the arms of his parents by premature decay (several cambrics were in requisition); that his young and now *apparently* healthy form may not be wasted by lingering disease. (Here Dumps cast a sardonic glance around, for a great sensation was manifest among the married ladies.) You, I am sure, will concur with me in wishing that he may live to be a comfort and a blessing to his parents. (‘Hear, hear!’ and an audible sob from Mr. Kitterbell.) But should he not be what we could wish — should he forget in after-times the duty which he owes to them — should they unhappily experience that distracting truth, ‘how sharper than a ser-

pent's tooth it is to have a thankless child.' " — Here Mrs. Kitterbell, with her handkerchief to her eyes, and accompanied by several ladies, rushed from the room, and went into violent hysterics in the passage, leaving her better half in almost as bad a condition, and a general impression in Dumps's favor ; for people like sentiment, after all.

It need hardly be added, that this occurrence quite put a stop to the harmony of the evening. Vinegar, harts-horn, and cold water, were now as much in request as negus, rout-cakes, and *bon-bons* had been a short time before. Mrs. Kitterbell was immediately conveyed to her apartment, the musicians were silenced, flirting ceased, and the company slowly departed. Dumps left the house at the commencement of the bustle, and walked home with a light step, and (for him) a cheerful heart. His landlady who slept in the next room, has offered to make oath that she heard him laugh, in his peculiar manner, after he had locked his door. The assertion, however, is so improbable, and bears on the face of it such strong evidence of untruth, that it has never obtained credence to this hour.

The family of Mr. Kitterbell has considerably increased since the period to which we have referred ; he has now two sons and a daughter ; and as he expects, at no distant period, to have another addition to his blooming progeny, he is anxious to secure an eligible godfather for the occasion. He is determined, however, to impose upon him two conditions. He must bind himself, by a solemn obligation, not to make any speech after supper ; and it is indispensable that he should be in no way connected with " the most miserable man in the world."

CHAPTER XII.

THE DRUNKARD'S DEATH.

WE will be bold to say, that there is scarcely a man in the constant habit of walking, day after day, through any of the crowded thoroughfares of London, who cannot recollect among the people whom he "knows by sight," to use a familiar phrase, some being of abject and wretched appearance whom he remembers to have seen in a very different condition, whom he has observed sinking lower and lower, by almost imperceptible degrees, and the shabbiness and utter destitution of whose appearance, at last, strike forcibly and painfully upon him, as he passes by. Is there any man who has mixed much with society, or whose avocations have caused him to mingle, at one time or other, with a great number of people, who cannot call to mind the time when some shabby, miserable wretch, in rags and filth, who shuffles past him now in all the squalor of disease and poverty, was a respectable tradesman, or a clerk, or a man following some thriving pursuit, with good prospects, and decent means? — or cannot any of our readers call to mind from among the list of their *quondam* acquaintance, some fallen and degraded man, who lingers about the pavement in hungry misery — from whom every one turns coldly away, and who preserves himself from sheer starvation, nobody knows how? Alas! such cases are of too frequent occurrence to be rare items in any man's experience; and but too often arise from one cause — drunk-



eness — that fierce rage for the slow, sure poison, that oversteps every other consideration; that casts aside wife, children, friends, happiness, and station; and hurries its victims madly on to degradation and death.

Some of these men have been impelled, by misfortune and misery, to the vice that has degraded them. The ruin of worldly expectations, the death of those they loved, the sorrow that slowly consumes, but will not break the heart, has driven them wild; and they present the hideous spectacle of madmen, slowly dying by their own hands. But by far the greater part have wilfully, and with open eyes, plunged into the gulf from which the man who once enters it never rises more, but into which he sinks deeper and deeper down, until recovery is hopeless.

Such a man as this once stood by the bedside of his dying wife, while his children knelt around and mingled low bursts of grief with their innocent prayers. The room was scantily and meanly furnished; and it needed but a glance at the pale form from which the light of life was fast passing away, to know that grief, and want, and anxious care, had been busy at the heart for many a weary year. An elderly female, with her face bathed in tears, was supporting the head of the dying woman — her daughter — on her arm. But it was not towards her that the wan face turned; it was not her hand that the cold and trembling fingers clasped; they pressed the husband's arm; the eyes so soon to be closed in death rested on his face, and the man shook beneath their gaze. His dress was slovenly and disordered, his face inflamed, his eyes bloodshot and heavy. He had been summoned from some wild debauch to the bed of sorrow and death.

A shaded lamp by the bedside cast a dim light on the

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figures around, and left the remainder of the room in thick, deep shadow. The silence of night prevailed without the house, and the stillness of death was in the chamber. A watch hung over the mantel-shelf; its low ticking was the only sound that broke the profound quiet, but it was a solemn one, for well they knew who heard it, that before it had recorded the passing of another hour, it would beat the knell of a departed spirit.

It is a dreadful thing to wait and watch for the approach of death; to know that hope is gone, and recovery impossible; and to sit and count the dreary hours through long, long, nights — such nights as only watchers by the bed of sickness know. It chills the blood to hear the dearest secrets of the heart — the pent-up, hidden secrets of many years — poured forth by the unconscious helpless being before you; and to think how little the reserve and cunning of a whole life will avail, when fever and delirium tear off the mask at last. Strange tales have been told in the wanderings of dying men; tales so full of guilt and crime, that those who stood by the sick person's couch have fled in horror and affright, lest they should be scared to madness by what they heard and saw; and many a wretch has died alone, raving of deeds the very name of which has driven the boldest man away.

But no such ravings were to be heard at the bedside by which the children knelt. Their half-stifled sobs and moanings alone broke the silence of the lonely chamber. And when at last the mother's grasp relaxed, and, turning one look from the children to their father, she vainly strove to speak, and fell backward on the pillow, all was so calm and tranquil that she seemed to sink to sleep. They leant over her; they called upon her name, softly

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at first, and then in the loud and piercing tones of desperation. But there was no reply. They listened for her breath, but no sound came. They felt for the palpitation of the heart, but no faint throb responded to the touch. That heart was broken, and she was dead!

The husband sunk into a chair by the bedside, and clasped his hands upon his burning forehead. He gazed from child to child, but when a weeping eye met his, he quailed beneath its look. No word of comfort was whispered in his ear, no look of kindness lighted on his face. All shrunk from and avoided him; and when at last he staggered from the room, no one sought to follow or console the widower.

The time had been when many a friend would have crowded round him in his affliction, and many a heartfelt condolence would have met him in his grief. Where were they now? One by one, friends, relations, the commonest acquaintance even, had fallen off from and deserted the drunkard. His wife alone had clung to him in good and evil, in sickness and poverty; and how had he rewarded her? He had reeled from the tavern to her bedside, in time to see her die.

He rushed from the house, and walked swiftly through the streets. Remorse, fear, shame, all crowded on his mind. Stupefied with drink, and bewildered with the scene he had just witnessed, he re-entered the tavern he had quitted shortly before. Glass succeeded glass. His blood mounted, and his brain whirled round. Death! Every one must die, and why not *she*. She was too good for him; her relations had often told him so. Curses on them! Had they not deserted her, and left her to whine away the time at home? Well — she was dead, and happy perhaps. It was better as it was.

Another glass — one more ! Hurrah ! It was a merry life while it lasted ; and he would make the most of it.

Time went on ; the three children who were left to him, grew up, and were children no longer. The father remained the same — poorer, shabbier, and more dissolute-looking, but the same confirmed and irreclaimable drunkard. The boys had, long ago, run wild in the streets, and left him ; the girl alone remained, but she worked hard, and words or blows could always procure him something for the tavern. So he went on in the old course, and a merry life he led.

One night, as early as ten o'clock, for the girl had been sick for many days, and there was, consequently, little to spend at the public-house — he bent his steps homewards, bethinking himself that if he would have her able to earn money, it would be as well to apply to the parish surgeon, or, at all events, to take the trouble of inquiring what ailed her, which he had not yet thought it worth while to do. It was a wet December night ; the wind blew piercing cold, and the rain poured heavily down. He begged a few halfpence from a passer-by, and having bought a small loaf (for it was his interest to keep the girl alive, if he could), he shuffled onwards as fast as the wind and rain would let him.

At the back of Fleet Street, and lying between it and the water-side, are several mean and narrow courts, which form a portion of Whitefriars ; it was to one of these that he directed his steps.

The alley into which he turned, might, for filth and misery, have competed with the darkest corner of this ancient sanctuary in its dirtiest and most lawless time. The houses, varying from two stories in height to four, were stained with every indescribable hue that long ex-

posure to the weather, damp, and rottenness can impart to tenements composed originally of the roughest and coarsest materials. The windows were patched with paper, and stuffed with the foulest rags; the doors were falling from their hinges; poles with lines on which to dry clothes, projected from every casement, and sounds of quarrelling or drunkenness issued from every room.

The solitary oil lamp in the centre of the court had been blown out, either by the violence of the wind or the act of some inhabitant who had excellent reasons for objecting to his residence being rendered too conspicuous; and the only light which fell upon the broken and uneven pavement, was derived from the miserable candles that here and there dwindled in the rooms of such of the more fortunate residents as could afford to indulge in so expensive a luxury. A gutter ran down the centre of the alley — all the sluggish odors of which had been called forth by the rain; and as the wind whistled through the old houses, the doors and shutters creaked upon their hinges, and the windows shook in their frames, with a violence which every moment seemed to threaten the destruction of the whole place.

The man whom we have followed into this den, walked on in the darkness, sometimes stumbling into the main gutter, and at others into some branch repositories of garbage which had been formed by the rain, until he reached the last house in the court. The door, or rather what was left of it, stood ajar, for the convenience of the numerous lodgers; and he proceeded to grope his way up the old and broken stair, to the attic story.

He was within a step or two of his room-door, when it opened, and a girl, whose miserable and emaciated appearance was only to be equalled by that of

the candle which she shaded with her hand, peeped anxiously out.

"Is that you, father?" said the girl.

"Who else should it be?" replied the man gruffly "What are you trembling at? It's little enough that I've had to drink to-day, for there's no drink without money, and no money without work. What the devil's the matter with the girl?"

"I am not well, father — not at all well," said the girl, bursting into tears.

"Ah!" replied the man, in the tone of a person who is compelled to admit a very unpleasant fact, to which he would rather remain blind, if he could. "You must get better somehow, for we must have money. You must go to the parish doctor, and make him give you some medicine. They're paid for it, damn 'em. What are you standing before the door for? Let me come in, can't you?"

"Father," whispered the girl, shutting the door behind her, and placing herself before it, "William has come back."

"Who!" said the man with a start.

"Hush," replied the girl, "William; brother William."

"And what does he want?" said the man, with an effort at composure — "money? meat? drink? He's come to the wrong shop for that, if he does. Give me the candle — give me the candle, fool — I a'n't going to hurt him." He snatched the candle from her hand, and walked into the room.

Sitting on an old box, with his head resting on his hand, and his eyes fixed on a wretched cinder fire that was smouldering on the hearth, was a young man of

about two-and-twenty, miserably clad in an old coarse jacket and trousers. He started up when his father entered.

"Fasten the door, Mary," said the young man hastily — "Fasten the door. You look as if you didn't know me, father. It's long enough since you drove me from home ; you may well forget me."

"And what do you want here, now ?" said the father, seating himself on a stool, on the other side of the fireplace. "What do you want here, now ?"

"Shelter," replied the son. "I'm in trouble ; that's enough. If I'm caught I shall swing ; that's certain. Caught I shall be, unless I stop here ; that's *as* certain. And there's an end of it."

"You mean to say, you've been robbing, or murdering, then ?" said the father.

"Yes I do," replied the son. "Does it surprise you, father ?" He looked steadily in the man's face, but he withdrew his eyes, and bent them on the ground.

"Where's your brothers ?" he said, after a long pause.

"Where they'll never trouble you," replied his son : "John's gone to America, and Henry's dead."

"Dead !" said the father, with a shudder, which even he could not repress.

"Dead," replied the young man. "He died in my arms — shot like a dog, by a gamekeeper. He staggered back, I caught him, and his blood trickled down my hands. It poured out from his side like water. He was weak, and it blinded him, but he threw himself down on his knees, on the grass, and prayed to God, that if his mother was in heaven, He would hear her prayers for pardon for her youngest son. 'I was her favorite boy, Will,' he said, 'and I am glad to think, now, that when

she was dying, though I was a very young child then, and my little heart was almost bursting, I knelt down at the foot of the bed, and thanked God for having made me so fond of her as to have never once done anything to bring the tears into her eyes. O Will, why was she taken away, and father left!’ There’s his dying words, father,” said the young man; “make the best you can of ’em. You struck him across the face, in a drunken fit, the morning we ran away; and here’s the end of it!”

The girl wept aloud; and the father, sinking his head upon his knees, rocked himself to and fro.

“If I am taken,” said the young man, “I shall be carried back into the country, and hung for that man’s murder. They cannot trace me here, without your assistance, father. For aught I know, you may give me up to justice; but unless you do, here I stop, until I can venture to escape abroad.”

For two whole days, all three remained in the wretched room, without stirring out. On the third evening, however, the girl was worse than she had been yet, and the few scraps of food they had were gone. It was indispensably necessary that somebody should go out; and as the girl was too weak and ill, the father went, just at nightfall.

He got some medicine for the girl, and a trifle in the way of pecuniary assistance. On his way back, he earned sixpence by holding a horse; and he turned homewards with enough money to supply their most pressing wants for two or three days to come. He had to pass the public-house. He lingered for an instant, walked past it, turned back again, lingered once more, and finally slunk in. Two men whom he had not observed, were on the watch.

They were on the point of giving up their search in despair, when his loitering attracted their attention; and when he entered the public-house, they followed him.

"You'll drink with me, master," said one of them, proffering him a glass of liquor.

"And me too," said the other, replenishing the glass as soon as it was drained of its contents.

The man thought of his hungry children, and his son's danger. But they were nothing to the drunkard. He *did* drink; and his reason left him.

"A wet night, Warden," whispered one of the men in his ear, as he at length turned to go away, after spending in liquor one-half of the money on which, perhaps, his daughter's life depended.

"The right sort of night for our friends in hiding, Master Warden," whispered the other.

"Sit down here," said the one who had spoken first, drawing him into a corner. "We have been looking arter the young un. We came to tell him, it's all right now, but we couldn't find him, 'cause we hadn't got the precise direction. But that a'n't strange, for I don't think he know'd it himself, when he come to London, did he?"

"No, he didn't," replied the father.

The two men exchanged glances.

"There's a vessel down at the docks, to sail at midnight, when it's high water," resumed the first speaker, "and we'll put him on board. His passage is taken in another name, and what's better than that, it's paid for. It's lucky we met you."

"Very," said the second.

"Capital luck," said the first, with a wink to his companion.

"Great," replied the second, with a slight nod of intelligence.

"Another glass here ; quick " — said the first speaker. And in five minutes more, the father had unconsciously yielded up his own son into the hangman's hands.

Slowly and heavily the time dragged along, as the brother and sister, in their miserable hiding-place, listened in anxious suspense to the slightest sound. At length, a heavy footstep was heard upon the stair ; it approached nearer ; it reached the landing : and the father staggered into the room.

The girl saw that he was intoxicated, and advanced with the candle in her hand to meet him ; she stopped short, gave a loud scream, and fell senseless on the ground. She had caught sight of the shadow of a man reflected on the floor. They both rushed in, and in another instant the young man was a prisoner, and handcuffed.

"Very quietly done," said one of the men to his companion, "thanks to the old man. Lift up the girl, Tom — Come, come, it's no use crying, young woman. It's all over now, and can't be helped."

The young man stooped for an instant over the girl, and then turned fiercely round upon his father, who had reeled against the wall, and was gazing on the group with drunken stupidity.

"Listen to me, father," he said, in a tone that made the drunkard's flesh creep. "My brother's blood, and mine, is on your head : I never had kind look, or word, or care, from you, and, alive or dead, I never will forgive you. Die when you will, or how, I will be with you. I speak as a dead man now, and I warn you, father, that as surely as you must one day stand before

your Maker, so surely shall your children be there, hand in hand, to cry for judgment against you." He raised his manacled hands in a threatening attitude, fixed his eyes on his shrinking parent, and slowly left the room; and neither father nor sister ever beheld him more, or this side of the grave.

When the dim and misty light of a winter's morning penetrated into the narrow court, and struggled through the begrimed window of the wretched room, Warden awoke from his heavy sleep, and found himself alone. He rose, and looked round him; the old flock mattress on the floor was undisturbed; everything was just as he remembered to have seen it last: and there were no signs of any one, save himself, having occupied the room during the night. He inquired of the other lodgers, and of the neighbors; but his daughter had not been seen or heard of. He rambled through the streets, and scrutinized each wretched face among the crowds that thronged them, with anxious eyes. But his search was fruitless, and he returned to his garret when night came on, desolate and weary.

For many days he occupied himself in the same manner, but no trace of his daughter did he meet with, and no word of her reached his ears. At length he gave up the pursuit as hopeless. He had long thought of the probability of her leaving him, and endeavoring to gain her bread in quiet, elsewhere. She had left him at last to starve alone. He ground his teeth and cursed her!

He begged his bread from door to door. Every half-penny he could wring from the pity or credulity of those to whom he addressed himself, was spent in the old way. A year passed over his head; the roof of a jail was the only one that had sheltered him for many months. He

slept under archways, and in brickfields — anywhere, where there was some warmth or shelter from the cold and rain. But in the last stage of poverty, disease, and houseless want, he was a drunkard still.

At last, one bitter night, he sunk down on a door-step faint and ill. The premature decay of vice and profligacy had worn him to the bone. His cheeks were hollow and livid; his eyes were sunken, and their sight was dim. His legs trembled beneath his weight, and a cold shiver ran through every limb.

And now the long-forgotten scenes of a misspent life crowded thick and fast upon him. He thought of the time when he had a home — a happy, cheerful home — and of those who peopled it, and flocked about him then, until the forms of his elder children seemed to rise from the grave, and stand about him — so plain, so clear, and so distinct they were, that he could touch and feel them. Looks that he had long forgotten were fixed upon him once more; voices long since hushed in death sounded in his ears like the music of village bells. But it was only for an instant. The rain beat heavily upon him; and cold and hunger were gnawing at his heart again.

He rose, and dragged his feeble limbs a few paces further. The street was silent and empty; the few passers who passed by, at that late hour, hurried quickly on, and his tremulous voice was lost in the violence of the storm. Again that heavy chill struck through his frame, and his blood seemed to stagnate beneath it. He coiled himself up in a projecting doorway, and tried to sleep.

But sleep had fled from his dull and glazed eyes. His mind wandered strangely, but he was awake, and conscious. The well-known shout of drunken mirth

sounded in his ear, the glass was at his lips, the board was covered with choice rich food — they were before him ; he could see them all, he had but to reach out his hand, and take them — and, though the illusion was reality itself, he knew that he was sitting alone in the deserted street, watching the rain-drops as they pattered on the stones ; that death was coming upon him by inches — and that there were none to care for or help him.

Suddenly he started up, in the extremity of terror. He had heard his own voice shouting in the night air, he knew not what, or why. Hark ! A groan ! — another ! His senses were leaving him : half-formed and incoherent words burst from his lips ; and his hands sought to tear and lacerate his flesh. He was going mad, and he shrieked for help till his voice failed him.

He raised his head, and looked up the long dismal street. He recollected that outcasts like himself, condemned to wander day and night in those dreadful streets, had sometimes gone distracted with their own loneliness. He remembered to have heard many years before that a homeless wretch had once been found in a solitary corner, sharpening a rusty knife to plunge into his own heart, preferring death to that endless, weary, wandering to and fro. In an instant his resolve was taken, his limbs received new life ; he ran quickly from the spot, and paused not for breath until he reached the river-side.

He crept softly down the steep stone stairs that lead from the commencement of Waterloo Bridge, down to the water's level. He crouched into a corner, and held his breath, as the patrol passed. Never did prisoner's heart throb with the hope of liberty and life half so eagerly as did that of the wretched man at the prospect of

death. The watch passed close to him, but he remained unobserved; and after waiting till the sound of footsteps had died away in the distance, he cautiously descended, and stood beneath the gloomy arch that forms the landing-place from the river.

The tide was in, and the water flowed at his feet. The rain had ceased, the wind was lulled, and all was, for the moment, still and quiet — so quiet, that the slightest sound on the opposite bank, even the rippling of the water against the barges that were moored there, was distinctly audible to his ear. The stream stole languidly and sluggishly on. Strange and fantastic forms rose to the surface, and beckoned him to approach; dark gleaming eyes peered from the water, and seemed to mock his hesitation, while hollow murmurs from behind urged him onwards. He retreated a few paces, took a short run, desperate leap, and plunged into the river.

Not five seconds had passed when he rose to the water's surface — but what a change had taken place in that short time, in all his thoughts and feelings! Life — life — in any form, poverty, misery, starvation — anything but death. He fought and struggled with the water that closed over his head, and screamed in agonies of terror. The curse of his own son rang in his ears. The shore — but one foot of dry ground — he could almost touch the step. One hand's breadth nearer, and he was saved — but the tide bore him onward, under the dark arches of the bridge, and he sank to the bottom.

Again he rose, and struggled for life. For one instant — for one brief instant — the buildings on the river's banks, the lights on the bridge through which the current had borne him, the black water, and the fast-flying

clouds, were distinctly visible — once more he sunk, and once again he rose. Bright flames of fire shot up from earth to heaven, and reeled before his eyes, while the water thundered in his ears, and stunned him with its furious roar.

A week afterwards the body was washed ashore, some miles down the river, a swollen and disfigured mass. Unrecognized and unpitied, it was borne to the grave ; and there it has long since mouldered away !

THE END.

